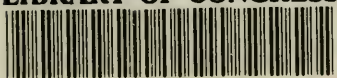


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PICTURE OF THE DIARIST  
TAKEN IN OCEAN CITY, SEPTEMBER, 1913

# SEASIDE SCENES *and* THOUGHTS

SOME EXTRACTS FROM A DIARY

ORIGINALLY SELECTED AND EDITED FOR "THE  
SPRINGFIELD (MASS.) REPUBLICAN," AND  
NOW DONE INTO A BOOK

BY

WALTER WILDER

BOSTON

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With compliments of the Author

## INTRODUCTION.

WHEN the diarial extracts which form the contents of this little Book were first printed in the columns of the Sunday and Weekly editions of "The Springfield Republican," it was far from the diarist's expectation that they ever would reappear before the public in any other form; but a few friends, known and unknown to the writer, having expressed a low-voiced yet insistent desire that the extracts should be gathered into a book, he has handed them over to the printer—and here they are again. The edition of them in this form is a very limited one, yet the writer's definite expectation is that it will be fully sufficient to supply the demand.

There is no pretension in the mind of the diarist that he has here written anything which will prove to be of more than passing value. The following pages contain only the reports and thoughts of an old man

## INTRODUCTION

who is keenly sympathetic with his fellow-men, especially with the juvenile portion of them. It is all plain and easy reading, of just what he saw, made a note of, and thought about; and this new presentation of the matter is offered to the reader with unaffected modesty on the part of

WALTER WILDER.

JUNE, 1914.

# SEASIDE SCENES AND THOUGHTS.

SOME LEAVES FROM A DIARY.

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## I.

*June 12, 1913.*—I took the 3 o'clock electric car from L. to Boston this afternoon, *en route* to Ocean City, N.J. Leslie met me by appointment in the city and accompanied me to Battery Wharf, where I was to board the steamer for Philadelphia. He had previously bought my ticket and engaged my stateroom,—an outer room, with two berths. Fortunately for me, the number of passengers bound for the same port with myself was small (about forty), so that I was able, without extra expense, to have my nice stateroom all to myself,—a special privilege which despoiled no one, though it inured to my sole benefit. The steamer, the *Grecian*, was late in starting, so Leslie decided not to wait to see me sail, but bade me good-by and returned to his office. (A

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good business man is always economical of his time.) It was half-past 5 before we got under way, and moved slowly down the harbor amidst pragmatic tugboats and placid islands. (It was Professor Huxley who said if he couldn't be Thomas H. Huxley he would rather be a tugboat than anything else.) When we had once got out to sea, our pace quickened. There was a stiff breeze blowing from the shore, which knocked up the sea, and we kept well out from disreputable Cape Cod. Though not sick, I experienced a mild ventral dissatisfaction, which was a little augmented by seeing a palefaced boy suddenly lean over the rail for relief. I put a good supper down on my uneasiness and smoked a cigar. Then I turned in early and slept like a top.

*June 13.*—Though the ocean roads are well sprinkled and dustless, they have one serious discomfort with which land roads are less affected. This is fog, which not only shuts out the sea view, so impressive to every appreciative ocean traveler, but which adds a danger dreaded by both officers and passengers. Sometimes it was im-



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possible to see ten rods ahead of us or around us. Nearly all day long the steamer's hoarse and solemn foghorn pealed forth its warning into the shrouded space of ocean and sky once in every sixty seconds, and continued to do so long into the night. I fancy that every man, however enlightened he may think himself to be, carries about with him at least one, or half of one, superstition; and I confess that, as my nerves were jangled out of tune by the growling monitor overhead, I couldn't help remembering that this was Friday, the 13th day of June, 1913.

There is an extraordinary preponderance of young folks, mostly girls, among our passengers; but as the girls are for the most part fresh and fair, I feel quite reconciled to their majority number. Two of the prettiest of them sit directly opposite to me at table. One of them is the whitest girl I ever saw. Her hair, her eyebrows and eyelashes, and her face look as if they had been bleached. At first I thought she must be an albino; but her eyes were heavenly blue, her lips were a rich red, and she had a mild and lovely expression. When I asked her

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to pass me the bread, she not only passed me that, but she gave me a smile so sweet that I entirely forgot what I had asked for. It is Walter Savage Landor who says that it is a sure sign that a man is growing old when he begins to like girls; but that cannot apply to me, for I always liked them.

This has been a monotonous day, with "nothing doing;" so I go to bed early to-night, turn over on my hearing ear to shut out the voice of the lofty growler, think of all my loved ones, and—think and fear no more.

*June 14.*—The fog attended us up Delaware River, even to the gates of the Quaker city; but before we had made fast to the wharf the sun had burned it all away, and ushered in fair and warm weather. The passengers debarked at 8 o'clock this morning in good health and spirits, notwithstanding the fateful omens of day and date. It is interesting to see girls take leave of one another,—interesting and sometimes just a bit exasperating. They generally do it with repeated embraces and kisses, making a solitary and soft-hearted old man feel somewhat extraneous. The dear things can't

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help acting so, "for 'tis their nature to," and for my part I wouldn't have them do otherwise for anything. The pulchritude of this hard-rubbing world is not so excessive in quantity as to make me willing to diminish or veil it in the least, especially when it is contributed to by the innocence and spontaneity of youth.

Carl met me at the office of the Merchants and Miners Transportation Company, piloted me across the ferry to Camden and aboard the train to Ocean City. He, too, is a business man, and had to "tear himself asunder" to do all this; but I reckon that in the great exchequer of life he doesn't expect any loss to come of it.

The house in Ocean City to which its dear little mistress gives me warm welcome is situated near the beach, there being only an avenue and the boardwalk between it and the rolling surf. Every room in the house, except the kitchen, commands a fine view of the sea, and is filled with the solemn music of its rote by night and by day.

*June 15.*—Carl takes us all down to Cape May this afternoon in a big automobile,

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with a professional chauffeur to drive it. Cape May is something over forty miles from Ocean City, almost directly south. As everybody knows, Cape May is one of the most fashionable watering resorts in this country, much favored by General Grant when he was president. I don't know how old it is in fashion's favor, but I used to hear about it when I was a boy, which seems centuries ago. I had never visited it before, and was glad of the opportunity to do so now. Its beach and surf are magnificent, and its boardwalk is miles and miles long. There are some elegant villas at its court end, and one palatial hotel, where you can spend a whole lot of money just for eating and sleeping. But Cape May is at a standstill now. Its bloom has been taken off by other south Jersey coast-resorts which have come into vogue later, especially Atlantic City. The country leading to it is as flat and level as a parlor floor, very monotonous and uninteresting. Fully half of New Jersey is like this, only the northern part of the State being broken up into hills. But this flat portion has a network of excellent roads, which are prevailingly

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straight, broad, and well founded. The vegetable productions are chiefly corn and potatoes; its fruits, peaches and melons and grapes. The houses are mostly small and plain, lacking paint. Its inhabitants, many of them colored (one whole village being composed solely of Negroes), find their principal occupation in raising "gard'n sass" for the temporary seashore folk.

*June 16.*—Another sortie into the flat portion of New Jersey by automobile, this time to Sea Isle City, one of the many seaside resorts of this region, to which steam cars and electric lines lead. Again I am impressed by the excellent quality of the roads running in every direction through this salt-marsh country. One spins through many small villages here and there, most uninviting in aspect. How anybody can bear to live in them, surrounded by marshes and assailed by Jersey "skeeters," is past understanding except on the presumption that somebody must live everywhere. We passed a swamp full of magnolia blossoms, and our chauffeur risked being stuck in it to gather a big bunch of these blooms for us. I fancy he did it

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because a pretty girl asked for them. We saw several catalpa trees in blossom, and the red-rambler rose was growing in front of many a small unpainted house. The forestation of this part of New Jersey is pine and oak,—the latter of sapling growth, being the recent successor of the former. Where soil has accumulated on marsh it is composed of sand, and more sand, and then again sand.

*June 18.*—The cooler weather following a hot spell has given the atmosphere a crystal clearness, dissipating all the haziness of these last few days. The ocean view has been much improved by this change, and is now fine and inspiring.

One of Ocean City's star features is an aeroplane, which makes almost daily ascensions. Mr. Gray (he isn't gray at all, but a young man), the aviator, is regularly established here, having his machine housed in a rough board-shanty on the beach close to the boardwalk. He is prepared to give a complete course of instruction in aviation, and takes passengers skyward in his machine at twenty-five dollars apiece, but doesn't guarantee to save the pieces. I have seen

him fly on two different occasions, and he does it as gracefully as a bird flies. I am more than willing that others should fly with him, but as for myself I have no desire to venture into the air until I have real wings of my own.

Carl's homecoming each night is the event of the whole day to our little household; for, in appearance at least, he always leaves behind him in the big city all his office cares and bothers. Fortunately, he is of a hopeful and sanguine temperament. It takes a great deal to discourage him. I have never seen him floored yet, albeit he has had two or three hard blows. He stays in the ring and fights as long as there is any antagonist to stand up against him. The battle joy is in his veins, and, like Job's horse, he says "Ha, ha!" when he hears the call to conflict. 'Tis a sorry chance in life for any man who is signally lacking in this spirit; for, say what we will in praise of the gentle virtues, the mailed hand is often needed to smite down unfair opposition. Life itself is a battle, not a dream, and every man who would not be beaten in it must be clothed with the soldier ardor.



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—It is safe to say that more than half of mankind have no resources in themselves for happiness. They are imprisoned in their own personalities, and would die of inanity but for the assistance which others bring to them. Uncompanied in themselves, they seek companionship in the world of excitement; and when the end comes, they leave an empty shell behind them—like these I see on the beach here.

*June 20.*—I pass a couple of hours down on the beach this morning with my pipe and “The Weekly Springfield Republican.” The news was a week old, but as I had waited a week for it I enjoyed reading it. I would rather have a week-old “Republican” than any day-old other paper I know, because by waiting I get my news well winnowed. If the world comes to an end some time when I am waiting, I know that “The Republican” will give me “the news and the truth about it.”

*June 21.*—It is fascinating to watch the mad gambol of the waves as they come tumbling and crashing in from far away yonder and roll thundering up the sloping beach. They seem instinct with life, acting



as if they were intent on achieving some purpose which they deliberately minded and thoroughly enjoyed, and this wholly regardless of my spell in watching them. They get a good start, as we boys say, far off there on the watery plain (it may be as far back as Africa), piling up as they advance a briny wall three or four feet high, black and formidable, apparently having force enough to reach and dislodge me from my present point of observation; but though enlarging and lengthening as they come on, their eagerness defeats itself. Suddenly their serried columns tremble; a shiver of apprehension seems to run through all their ranks; a white spray of fear glances along the crest of the black wall; it hesitates an instant, breaks, and then down it tumbles in tumultuous confusion—only, however, to rise again, and, pushed on by recruiting forces behind, to plunge recklessly forward with shattered momentum and spent power, until finally it has only strength enough left to obey the recall of the sea, and slides back to its original base.

Another aspect of the gamboling waves

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is seen when the tide is low. Then their impetus is much less, but the apparent spirit of fun in them is even more rollicking, as if they felt themselves unwatched by their stern commander. Now as they come rolling in they seem to be playing leapfrog together. They climb over one another's backs and roll over in one another's arms, each scrambling to outdo the other in reaching the strand first. I seem to hear them shout with glee at the merry sport they are having, forgetting for the time the grim and mighty main behind them, out of which they came and to which they must return; forgetting also that every one of them is enslaved to the imperial moon, held fast in her strong leash, which pulls them back and forth between Afric's sands and America's shores.

Thus these wild waves have rolled and roared, sung and sported, thousands upon thousands of years, when no human eye or ear was present either to see or listen to them. What a startling thought is this! How small and transient it makes us seem in comparison with the mighty and ancient forces of Nature! In our holiday mood we had almost come to

believe that this dazzling spectacle of the sea was a part of the entertainment for which we had paid our vacation money, gotten up for our special delectation; but now we are staggered by the reflection that Nature performs not for us, but for herself. "Before Abraham was, I am," she thunders at us. "Before you had eyes to see or ears to hear, I was busy with my own great tasks. You are an incident; I am a permanent. I shall remain after you are swept into oblivion."

*June 22.*—We have a fairly steady procession past our house every day of men, women, and children to and from the boardwalk and the beach. Some of them are mere promenaders, while others are bathers. There being no bath-houses on the beach (a wise inhibition in behalf of the freedom of the beach), the bathers have to undress and redress in their own cottages, and walk through the streets going and returning. Some of them are decidedly attractive in their bathing suits, particularly the children and girls in their "teens," while others present anything but a pleasing appearance. There is a conventional immodesty as well as a con-

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ventional modesty in personal garbing, and both are conspicuously in evidence at every seaside resort. What is suitable to the occasion and becoming to the wearer can easily escape criticism, but what is otherwise must take its chances of being sent to Coventry.

*June 24.*—The municipality of Ocean City was founded thirty-three years ago by the Ocean City Association. Previous to that the island had been bought by three brothers who bore the name of Lake. They were Methodists, although sired by a Quaker, and they laid out a portion of the island at the north end as a camp-meeting site, to which came annually many of that loud-voiced denomination for prayer and praise—and they continue yet to assemble here in August of every year. But though on religion bent, the brothers Lake had in them “a frugal mind,” becoming convinced that here was an excellent opportunity for profit as well as for worship, for riches which could be treasured in this world no less than for such as it is alleged can be “laid up” in the next. A business association was formed, which took over all of the island except the camp-meet-

ing ground, and they proceeded to exploit their possession by selling lots to individual owners. They have done this so successfully, that, from a single farmhouse thirty-two years ago, they now have a municipality which in 1912 had a valuation of over \$8,000,000, and which is now increasing at the rate of nearly \$1,000,000 a year,—a fairly neat result of combining worldly prudence with unworldly piety. It is claimed, and apparently with justice, that the prohibition of objectionable features, such as the sale of intoxicating liquors, has kept the city so clean morally that it is a haven of safety for wives, mothers, and children while the heads of families are attending to their business in the big city during the day.

Ocean City is situated on an island eight miles long and less than half that wide. It was formerly known as Peck's Beach. It is sixty-five miles south of Philadelphia and forty-two miles south of Atlantic City. Being on an island, both the front door and back door of Ocean City open out on a waterscape,—the Atlantic Ocean on the east, and Great Egg Harbor (called the Back Bay)

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on the west. Elegant villas adorn both sides, and also the north end. The sewerage system of the city is excellent, and no filth is apparent anywhere; indeed, the city from end to end has a remarkably clean appearance. No stables are allowed to be built on the streets, and automobiles and motor trucks are so numerous that horse vehicles are the exception. The city is exclusively lighted by electricity, electric bulbs and gas stoves being in all the better-class houses. Ocean City is particularly favored in its water supply, having a fresh water river eight hundred feet below its surface, which it taps with artesian shafts, and from which it gets an unfailing quantity of pure, soft water.

*June 27.*—Being unfamiliar with this little city I have to ask some questions anent direction, locality, etc. To-day I wanted to find the post-office, and stepped into a garage for information. The man I accosted was bareheaded, barearmed, and somewhat grimy; but though driven with work he kindly stopped and came out on the sidewalk with me, and pointing down the avenue

said, "Go ahead till you come to Eighth Street, then turn to the left— No, damn it! that ain't right; turn to the right, and the post-office ain't fur away." I thanked him, and said, "In finding our way through life it is almost always safer to turn to the right, don't you think?" He looked at me confusedly for an instant, and then, smiling, said, "Well, I reckon that's so."

This little incident reminds me that I once had the honor and pleasure of entertaining at my house the distinguished English radical, George Jacob Holyoake. We were talking together in the parlor when supper was announced. Just at that moment I was summoned to the front door by a caller. Not wishing to detain Mr. Holyoake in the hall, and knowing that my wife was in the dining-room waiting for us, I said to him, "Please don't wait for me," and directing him how to proceed, I turned to attend to my transient caller. Almost the next moment I had followed my guest, and entered the dining-room soon enough to hear him say to my wife, "Your husband has just given me the best counsel I ever had in all my long and



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eventful life. In directing me to you he told me to 'follow the Light and turn to the Right,' and here I am in your gracious presence." Mr. Holyoake was no courtier; he had been a toiler and a soldier in many a cause for the economic welfare and intellectual enlightenment of the people, having once suffered actual imprisonment for "denying the gods," as was said of Socrates; but he was a most genial and warm-hearted man, and had a keen sense of humor.

*June 28.*—I have begun the habit of taking a long morning walk on the beach before breakfast, which walk I thoroughly enjoy. Generally I have few competitors in these saunterings, sometimes none at all. I enjoy the beach more in the early morning, when it is less frequented by the cottagers, and when the mystery of the sea is undiluted by the garishness of the fuller day.

*June 29.*—There is a wrecked ship nearly a mile down the beach from our house which appeals strongly to my sympathetic interest, and thither my steps in the early morning often turn. It was driven ashore here not long ago, and is now slowly going to pieces



under the continuous bombardment of the heavy surf. How many human lives are like her in their sad fate! I must learn more about her history from some dependable source, and not trust to the floating rumors about her which so decry her commander.

*June 30.*—My ante-breakfast walk this morning took me again to the wrecked ship in which I have such a sad interest. A human quality attaches to her, making her fate pathetic in my eyes. I can easily fancy that she regards me with mournful silence, mutely appealing to me for sympathy with her unhappy lot. The sight of her oppresses and yet fascinates me.

The fashions of feminine apparel are on complete exhibition in Ocean City this summer. So far I have not seen the slit skirt, but the absence of this latest revealer of the charms of the fair sex has not prevented my seeing some other things. The present fashion of woman's garments comes as near to wearing trousers as the presence of skirts will allow. When there is no petticoat, or only a very thin one, worn under the gown, as in the hottest days appears not infre-

quently to be the case; and when the gown itself is smartly hobbled, and is moreover composed of a diaphanous material and dependent from the modern corset,—when this combination of ingenious feminine enrobing occurs, it must be confessed that the sub-torso anatomy of the wearer is distinctly revealing. But what then? Certainly nothing which need alarm any one, much less necessarily demoralize either the seen or the seer. When these same girls and women go in bathing, their skirts are decidedly short and their blouses very low in the neck; but nobody, not even the staidest, objects. Why? Because it is the universal custom and altogether suitable. The men bathers are even more exposed in their persons. Their necks, arms, legs, feet, are all bare; and in this semi-nude condition they not only sport familiarly with the girls and women in the water, sit and lounge side by side with them on the beach, but walk with them through the streets to and from their houses—and again nobody thinks of criticizing a universal and suitable custom. The vogue settles the question of propriety, and

the publicity of it silences suspicion. If one were to do it alone, or two were to do it on the sly, criticism might be justified; but where they all dress so and sport so, and do so openly, it would seem that only they who have prurient or austere minds will make an outcry against it. What is better and even safer than modesty, is innocent self-unconsciousness. Would that we might all keep this charming quality from childhood even into old age!

## II.

*July 1.*—On my beach walk this morning I counted nine craft on the far margin of the sea. The sky was crystalline in its purity, and the air was sweet and bracing. I felt so kindled in spirit that I sang softly to myself “The Rose of Allandale,” beginning,—

“The morn was fair, the sky was clear,  
No breath came o’er the sea,”—

and then I repeated Byron’s fine sonnet to the ocean,—

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“Roll on, thou deep and dark blue ocean, roll!  
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain,” etc.

These ante-breakfast walks are a great thing for me. They begin the day in just the right way, keying up the tone of my mind to the proper pitch. Our dog Dick always teases to go with me on these walks, and I should be only too glad to have him if he would but obey my recall after scampering off to speak to some other dog. But he has not yet accepted me as an authority whom he is bound to heed, and as he is a valuable dog I don't dare to risk the loss of him. It hurts me to see his reproachful eyes following me as I walk off without him. I have tried to state the case fairly to him, but he so far refuses to admit that I have any higher motive for leaving him behind than obduracy. He is much mistaken, for I like dogs, and hope sometime to convince him of that fact.

Last evening I strolled up the boardwalk with Otilie and Fred,\* as far as the music

\* The person denominated “Fred” in these diarial extracts is not a boy, but a girl. As, however, she is as frolicsome and athletic as any healthy boy, and one of her names being Frederica, the diarist humorously christened her Fred.

pavilion, where we sat for an hour or more listening to some fine music by an excellent band. This band is employed for the season and paid by the city, thus giving free music to the cottagers. The audience was large and appreciative.

*July 3.*—I miss the vivid and avid companionship of my little grandchildren even more than I expected to. While walking on the beach this morning they were so much in my thoughts that I involuntarily uttered their names aloud, and then stopped and wrote those names in the sand with my cane, drawing a big circle around them. Of course, I knew that the rising tide would erase them in an hour or two; but it cannot wash them from my loving memory, and it was pleasing to me to see their dear names writ large before my eyes even for a few minutes.

*July 4.*—I rose early for my walk this morning and heard only two modest fire-crackers announcing that this is the natal day of our nation. These were "let off" by two bareheaded and barelegged urchins under the boardwalk, accompanied by a small dog

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and some broad grins. I shouted "Bang!" as I heard the explosion, which sympathetic exclamation appeared to please the kiddies.

The day has worn on with astonishingly little noise or garishness of any kind. A "safe and sane" Fourth this surely has been in Ocean City. I doubt if so much as an eyebrow has been singed or a finger-tip scorched on the whole of this island to-day. Yet there has been a constant movement among the thousands of people here all the day long. Countless automobiles have shot through the streets and broad avenues, some of them gayly adorned with fluttering banners; the boardwalk procession of loafers and lovers has never ceased; the bathers have paddled, dipped, and plunged by scores and hundreds; the theaters and all the places of amusement have been filled to overflowing; the dear children have raced up and down the beach, and the sweet babies have royally ridden in their little chariots to and fro on the boardwalk. In the evening a few scattering and fizzing fireworks were all the display we had in that line. Everybody has seemed to be happy, and nobody has been

reckless or truculent. So far as I have observed or heard, not a thing has happened to trititiate a single human heart among all this moving multitude. Heartily do I wish that the whole world might so move on, every day in every year; and it should, if I were its cosmic manager. I would not postpone universal peace and bliss to some *post-mortem* day, but I would fill every human heart full with it, and light up every human face with a reflection of it, "here below."

*July 5.*—The sea doesn't hold the same aspect two hours at a time. Seldom is it crystallly clear, giving us the seven-mile view of it to which we are entitled by the rotundity of the earth. Often fog wipes it out entirely, and only its never-silenced voice gives attestation of its existence. Then again it becomes dreamy and misty where it touches the eyelids of the stooping sky, as if the two were whispering secrets to each other too important and sacred for human ears to hear. I always feel when I am standing by the sea that it is a great Being with a soul in it, the vastness and depth of which I cannot penetrate or divine.



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This evening I went with Carl and Ottilie to join the great procession on the boardwalk. We hired two rolling-chairs, double and single, and trundled the whole distance to the northern end of the walk, where we could plainly see the glimmering lights on the boardwalk in Atlantic City, forty odd miles away by land. The boardwalk here as there is a kaleidoscopic midway stretching its serpentine length between the city and the sea, full of brilliant lights, of challenging shops, booths, and show-places, of playful children, fumiferous men, bonnie maidens, and staid matrons. I am in hearty sympathy with the whole tribe.

*July 6.*—I spend much time in watching the children digging in the loose sand under the boardwalk, and the babies toddling along the beach. The sand-diggers scoop out deep holes with their toy shovels and build high walls around the excavation, fancying that they are forts to defend or to sally from. The martial spirit is as indigenous in boys as the sweets-loving taste is in girls. These fort-builders are dead in earnest in their occupation, which for the nonce seems to



them as real and important as John D.'s oil wells or J. P.'s steel works seem to those millionaire magnates. The darling babies toddle down to the water's edge to throw in a pebble or a shell which they have picked up, being rescued by a nurse or a parent just in time to escape a foot-wetting by the on-coming wave as it slides rapidly up the gently sloping shore. This mimic devotion to earnest play goes on hour after hour and day after day, not only here but all over the earth; and the old man, whose days of toil are past, drops easily back again into sympathetic interest in childish ways and pastimes.

*July 7.*—There is a difference of more than twelve degrees between to-day's temperature and yesterday's, a difference not wholly acceptable to me. I expect to be cool enough next January, and I don't ask similar favors of July. Summer is the time for heat; why growl, then, because summer is hot?

—'Tis astonishing what an amount of un-dependable and even false information one can pick up from persons who are always

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so willing to tell what they don't know. I have been obsessed by interest in the sad fate of the ship whose wrecked remains lie on the beach here, and I have tried to gather in her true story from such sporadic sources as sprang up in my path, not knowing of any authoritative source of information concerning her. The other day I called on the editor of one of the local newspapers in this city, who is a clergyman, and he kindly gave me a copy of the "Ocean City Directory and Handbook of Information" for 1912. I took it home with me, and sat down to study it. Herein I find what may be regarded as an official account of the wreck, and a truthful exposé of the many "ain't so's" which have been glibly told to me about it.

First, the wreck occurred twelve years ago (December 21, 1901), not two years ago as reported to me. Second, no lives were lost ("a good many" were, it was given to me), but the whole crew of thirty-three men and officers (she carried no passengers) were rescued by the United States life-saving service established in Ocean City. Third, the captain was not drunk, as I was told he

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was, but was cool, self-possessed, and brave, the disaster to his ship being not by his fault at all, but by storm and darkness and the "lay of the land" off this local shore,—shoal water stretching out six or seven miles along this portion of the Jersey coast, and the slope seaward being very gradual and gentle. The captain's name was Allan McKenzie, and this was his first shipwreck in his thirty-five years of otherwise successful experience as a sailing-master in every quarter of the globe. (How I do love to see a good man exonerated from aspersion and blame!) Fourth, the ship's name was the *Sindia*, not *Cynthia*, as a man who didn't know told me.

The keel of the *Sindia* was laid in Belfast, Ireland, in 1887, and she was fitted out as a steamship, being regarded as first among her class of steamers to be built in that harbor. After four years of service in British waters she was transformed into a four-masted sailing vessel, and began her world-wide career as a merchantman. Under Captain McKenzie, who had built her, she sailed over two hundred thousand miles, and won the reputation of being the fastest and luckiest

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of her class,—it being a proverb among sailing-masters that “his Satanic Majesty never sent a gale which didn’t turn in favor of McKenzie.” But the goddess Fortuna loves to play her pranks even on her favorites, and this time her fickleness proved fatal to McKenzie. He sailed from New York for Japan with a cargo of oil, the *Sindia* having been bought by the Standard Oil Company, and was returning with a varied and valuable freight. He had experienced unusually fine weather during the whole trip until seven days before the final catastrophe, when, coming up through the Gulf Stream, he sailed into a furious gale. In the great darkness he steered northwesterly, hoping to make some port for temporary shelter, but his ship was gradually driven ashore at this point, which had been the grave of many a brave craft before. The *Sindia* had a steel frame, was 329 feet long, 49 beam, 26 draft, and a tonnage of 6,000.

*July 9.*—This morning Otilie gives me a two-hours’ drive in her automobile. We drive from end to end of the island several times, almost always going through different

streets and avenues each time. This has given me a good idea of the extent and topography of Ocean City. It appears full of promise and potentiality. The architecture of it is pleasingly varied in style; only on one street did I see any marked uniformity of construction in the houses. Many of them are small but quaint in appearance, having no upper story; some of them are pretty bungalows. Now and then there is to be seen a really expensive and elaborate house. Large and handsome apartment houses appear to be much in demand here. Of hotels here their name is legion, the largest and most pretentious one being the Normandie. On the whole, however, Ocean City appears to be a city of real homes—more so than Atlantic City. It is laid out in right angles,—streets running east and west (numbering in all fifty-nine), and four avenues running north and south. All of them, streets and avenues, are wide and well founded; the sidewalks are excellent, in most cases being made of manufactured stone. Otilie drives her car with a discriminative combination of audacity and caution.

*July 10.*—I passed several hours this forenoon in walking the streets and achieving a few errands. One of them was to buy a pound-box of delicious salt-water taffy to send to my little granddaughter. I went to the post-office to mail it by parcel post (expense ten cents, which might have been twenty-five cents by express), and to write a card to the sweetheart informing her of the forthcoming gift. In writing the postal card I became mentally confused as to date, whether the 9th or the 10th. Seeing a man near me at the desk, I said, "Pardon me, sir, is to-day Wednesday or Thursday? An old man forgets." He stepped closer to me, and I observed that his eyes had a fanatic look in them. He pulled from his pocket, not a pistol, but a printed card, which he handed to me, and which informed me that he was a Salvation Army colonel. He began to "brother" me profusely, and after telling me many things besides the day of the week, he said, "Brother, remember me in your prayers." If he had overheard a small word which I used a little later at a sputtering pen I had borrowed of Uncle Sam, he might

have had some misgiving as to the efficacy of my prayers, although the word I had used may be found in the Bible.

By the way, why do Christians still continue to pray so much? They have been praying incessantly now for two thousand years, and it would seem by this time that their God ought to know quite well enough what they want of him. Why, then, can't they let him alone from now on, to do what he thinks best without any more teasing from them?

*July 12.*—I have had a new experience to-day, and it is Goethe, I believe, who says that life is worth living for the sake of its new experiences. I have been crabbing for the first time in my life. I had supposed that going crabbing was like going fishing; but it is, and it isn't. In fishing, you practice nothing but deceit. You just tell the fish a lie: you say to him, "Here is a nice fat worm which I want you to eat and be grateful to me evermore." If the fish is fool enough to trust you, he swallows your worm—and the hook hidden in it—and you pull him in and eat him. In catching a crab you



have to combine artful strategy with bold attack. You throw to him a piece of fish, with no hook inside it, and let it lie on the bottom for several minutes, as if you meant it for his sole good. But your gift has a string to it, and slowly, without jerks, you pull it up to the side of the boat,—trusting that the crab, having nibbled at the fish and found it toothsome, will follow it to the surface. If he does so, then you have to go for him with a long-handled scoop-net, and thus, if you are a successful scooper, land him in the boat. But the crab is a gamey crustacean, and if you try to take him out of the net with your hand he is likely to make you repent your rashness. The best way is to shake him out if you can; if you can't, then it is a fair fight between the deftness of your fingers and the incisiveness of his tentacles. Otilie, who was my fellow-crabbist, handled the scoop-net with great dexterity, and succeeded in scooping half a bushel of these delicious crustacea.

*July 13.*—As I was walking along the beach this morning I saw a man, evidently well into the sixties, studiously devoting himself to



the entertainment of two children,—a boy and a girl. He was patiently and smilingly attentive to all their little pastimes, endeavoring to further them in every possible way, carrying whatsoever of their play-implements they handed to him and producing the same on demand, running down with them to the edge of the receding water-line and then hastening them back again to keep them dry shod, and, in fact, doing all and everything as though it were as much fun for him as it clearly was for the youngsters,—thus acting as too few real fathers act with their children. I wanted very much to speak to this man, but one of the infirmities with which old age has afflicted me is a growing deafness, which makes it difficult for me to talk with others without the use of artificial aid; hence, the habit has grown upon me of shyness in inviting conversation with others, trying to be content with that which often passes between what Whittier calls “My Soul and I.” Yet I was so much interested in this man’s conduct that I said to myself, “That old boy must belong to the same army that I do, and, by hookey! I’ll

ask him if he doesn't." Drawing my trumpet, I advanced upon him and said, "Excuse me, sir, but aren't you a grandfather, and aren't these your grandchildren?" With that proud smile on his face which I had expected to see, he said, "That's so. I am a grandfather, and these are my grandchildren." It was my turn to smile now, and I said, "I thought so; for being a grandfather myself, I know how fond old grandfathers act—just as you are acting." Then followed a little of that talk of which only grandfathers are capable, in which they swap grandchildren, so to speak; and then I said, "Aren't you a Scotchman? Why I ask this is that you look enough like Andrew Carnegie to be his brother." He squared his shoulders a bit before replying, "Yes, I am a Scotchman; but I am not Andrew Carnegie's brother, and what's more I don't want to be, for in that case I might come in for some of his millions, and I don't approve of the way he got 'em." I nodded my assent to this; but not caring to enter into an economic discussion with him (though we probably should have agreed fairly well in that

line), and having said all I wanted to say to him, I held out my hand, which he grasped cordially, and we said good-by to each other.

*July 14.*—This morning Ottilie and I had a fine automobile drive down to Cape May Court House, the shire town of Cape May County, fifteen miles this side of Cape May. The round drive was about sixty miles, and it consumed about three hours. More than half an hour of this time was wasted by the balking of our car, in which we experienced the kind helpfulness of a passing auto containing four men, including a Negro chauffeur. 'Tis the "law of the road" to render assistance to a sister auto when she needs it. Nobody could find out why our car wouldn't go. Nothing appeared to be amiss in her machinery. She simply wouldn't crank; or, rather, she was too cranky to crank. But as mysteriously she stopped, so as mysteriously she started. All at once she cranked and away we sped, shouting out our thanks to the good Samaritans who had not "passed by on the other side."

*July 15.*—Carl and Ottilie go out to a card party this evening. Fred also goes out with

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two young folks,—one of them a boy, of course, since two girls all alone are but sighing company for each other,—and I am left *solus* with my evening cigar and the sounding sea, good enough companions for an old man. While thus alone and pondering I count, in the course of about an hour, more than fifty automobiles flashing through the three streets of which my armchair commands a view. The ubiquitous automobile, how it has supplanted the equine vehicle! Will it in turn some time be supplanted by the airship?

As I sit thus alone, Mnemosyne, that supreme goddess of the lonely hour, leads me through paths which are pleasant and paths which are painful. Her rule is so imperious and yet wayward that I sometimes wish that the division of our mind which we call memory were, like our large sea-going vessels, composed of separate tight compartments, we being intrusted with the keys of each, so that we might—say, in our old age—put all our painful remembrances into one compartment, lock the door on it, throw the key into the deep sea, and have only our pleas-

ant remembrances left to dwell on. I wonder if Professor Muensterberg knows of any way of fixing up such an arrangement for us!

*July 16.*—I was early on the beach this morning for my usual mile walk before breakfast,—that is, down to the wrecked *Sindia* and back. How I do feed on these lonely walks in the fresh air of the new-born day! Seeing the empty shells cast up by the sea in plentiful profusion, I was reminded of Dr. Holmes's highest poetic flight, "The Chambered Nautilus," the last stanza of which I uttered aloud,—

"Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,  
 As the swift seasons roll!  
 Leave thy low-vaulted past!  
 Let each new temple, nobler than the last,  
 Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,  
 Till thou at length art free,  
 Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting  
 sea!"

*July 17.*—Otilie gives me another spin over the island in her car to-day. The whole island is as flat as a flapjack. Only a few native trees, and these stunted and scraggy, are to be seen on the island, but

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some imported ones have been set out here and there, which because of the sweeping local winds are likely to have a hard time in growing. All of the island which has not been built upon or laid out in lots is covered either with a coarse kind of grass and weeds or with low bushes, making in places a perfect home jungle for mosquitoes; and yet the dwellers on the ocean side are seldom annoyed by these pesky pirates sent forth by Nature to harry and destroy mankind. The sand dunes at the south end are piled high along the inside line of the beach, cutting off the ocean view from the passerby in the street. The houses at this end of the island are mostly of the cheaper quality, though occasionally one sees even here a pretty and a costly residence. There are two thoroughly equipped United States life-saving stations at this point, because right here is the special point of danger to passing ships.

*July 18.*—This morning's walk on the beach had to be done in a raincoat. A "sou'-easter" had been blowing heavily for several hours, and Neptune was bellowing his rage

at such treatment from his brother Æolus. 'Twas an incoming tide, and for many rods out from the beach a series of high watery terraces were dashing thunderously toward me. My spectacles were covered with flying spray, and I had often to remove and wipe them before I could safely walk on. Great drifts of fleecy foam were strewn along the beach, of a dirty-white color, and so thick in substance were they that I could lift them on the end of my cane. Of course I visited my unfortunate friend *Sindia*, being anxious to see how she bore such elemental buffeting. She shivered every time the powerful breakers struck her, but her huge steel frame, more than half imbedded in the sand, stubbornly held its ground,—the final day of her fate not yet having come, as it surely will come soon or late.

*July 19.*—Most persons call this kind of weather hot, and swear at it; but the thermometer records only 86 in the shade. Hot weather means 100.

Being all alone again this evening, the younger members of our little family absent, I lighted my cigar and went down to one of



the pavilions on the boardwalk. There I saw a sweet baby, which captivated me at once. He was at that age when the ability to walk comes all at once, as it were, as a delightful surprise to a baby, and this one was in high glee over his new-found power of locomotion. His father took the baby out of the carriage and sat down with him near me. But his babyship was for action, not for rest. He slipped down out of his father's arms and began to toddle along the floor, his tiny feet far apart and his short arms outstretched for balance. Suddenly he sat down on the floor with a bump, the shock imparting to his features an instant's shade of alarm; but being well padded in the locality of the bump, and finding himself unharmed by it, he struggled slowly to his feet and began to toddle again,—finally turning cautiously half-round and seeking shelter in his father's ready arms. He repeated these adventures in walking at least a dozen times, his lovely face always radiant with glee over the enterprise. Once, in a moment of perplexity, he accepted a little assistance from me, having discovered my sympathetic in-



terest in his efforts, and I was rewarded for it with an angelic smile. Finally his proud father put him in the carriage and trundled him away,—my heart following the innocent darling with a great sigh of longing. Verily, “a little child shall lead them.”

*July 20.*—This Sunday has been a sweet and quiet day, passed by me almost alone. I had my ante-breakfast walk, and have given the remainder of the day chiefly to reading and writing.

—Although I long ago ceased to regard the Bible as authority in matters of belief, I yield to no one in my estimate of it as an English classic. Its literary quality is of the highest mark. So constant was my former reading of it, when I went to it for fulness and finality of doctrine, that no inconsiderable portions of it are now enshrined in my memory, and I often recite them aloud when I am all alone, finding their literary flavor rich and savory on my tongue. Of course I have reference now to what we call “King James’s Bible,” and not to any of the “revised versions.” These revisions interest me only academically, and not much even

so. Many of their emendations and corrections have a decidedly marring effect upon the purely literary expression of the dear old Bible, and are therefore offensive to my ear. Interest in scholarship is one thing; interest in good literature is another thing. One of the best scholars that Cambridge ever produced, and she has produced not a few, once told me that when he wanted to read "The Iliad" or "The Odyssey" for real pleasure he always read Pope's translation of those classics, albeit scholars (and he among them) regard that translation as rather a free one. So, since I love the Bible now not as the "word of God" but as the word and work of man, I do not like to have it trimmed by pedants and doctrinaires, who spoil its literary style in the interest of what they call accuracy and authenticity. I wish they would let us read it as a classic, as we read Virgil and Homer and Shakespeare and Omar Khayyam. When we can once divest our minds of all inherited superstition regarding this grand old book, and accept it as real literature—nothing more and nothing less—we shall all agree that it is a precious relic

of the past, and familiarity with its pages will be considered in our halls of learning as necessary a part of culture as a knowledge of other classics is now.

*July 21.*—This morning's early walk on the beach was delightful. The sea was in a wholly different mood from that of last Friday. A land breeze of several hours had sufficed to give it calmness, and it sang in soft, low murmurs. I walked close to the water line, having occasionally to deviate a little as the longest wave came flashing up the strand. The waterscape was fairly clear, but no ghostly sail hovered anywhere on its margin. I was alone with the world of land and sea and sky. Sweet peace stole into my heart. 'Twas all much better than a prayer-meeting. Returning up the beach, I mounted the stairs to the boardwalk and stepped into a pavilion for a moment's rest. There I saw a gray-haired matron who had with her a baby in a carriage,—her grandchild I was sure. She was trying to amuse the infant by tossing up before it a little knitted ball on a string. But the baby had caught sight of the large blue glasses which I sometimes

wear in bright weather, and was staring at them fixedly. I went up to the carriage and crooned a few soft syllables to its little occupant, saying aside to the woman, "I love babies. I have had three of my own, but they are all grown up and busy men now; yet I have three little grandchildren to take their places. You are a grandmother, aren't you?" She replied, "Yes, this is my grandchild. Its mother died the day it was born, and she never saw it." So my pleasant walk ended in sadness.

*July 22.*—The stand-pat Republican senators are prophesying that the prosperity of the country will be ruined by the new Democratic tariff law. If the curtailment of special privilege will cause the ruination of our prosperity, it will prove only that that prosperity has been built up on a wrong basis. We have never had more strikes and fierce industrial disorder than have taken place under a high tariff, especially the Payne-Aldrich tariff, highest of all tariffs. The manufacturers say, "Give us protection for the sake of our American laborers, that they may have constant employment

and high wages.” But when protection is given them, what do they? They import cheap labor from Europe, so cheap that our native laborers, who are used to better living than the masses of Europe have ever had, cannot compete with them. Thus the mill and mine lords, not the American workmen, get the benefit of what they call protection. Protection? Sure, we all need it; but it is protection for fair play and equal opportunity. Having these, prosperity will then be achieved by the industrious and the ingenious.

*July 23.*—Watching the bathers is one of the primordial pastimes at a seaside resort of all those who for any reason do not themselves indulge in salt-water bathing. There is here always fully as large a number of watchers as of bathers, and I fancy that the enjoyment of the occasion is about equally divided between the ins and the outs—which cannot be said of the political game. While bathing in the surf is done here at all hours of the day between sunup and sundown, according to the convenience of individual bathers, the most observed time for the sport,

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when it really is a sport and not a mere hygienic exercise, is from about 11 o'clock to half-past 12. Then, for more than half a mile up and down the beach, hundreds of bathers furnish a kaleidoscopic scene which is fast and funny.

The bathers naturally fall into four classes, and each class forms a distinctly different line or row from all the others. First, there is the infant class, composed of little children from three to seven or thereabout, who, wary of the great waves, yet loving the excitement of the sport, venture into the water only a little way, and just dabble and play in it, scampering out when they see a roller coming. I find that I observe these more than any other class. The second class consists of sedate and middle-aged women, mostly spinsters whose years entitle them to the degree of A. M. These wade in cautiously about up to the point where the modern corset terminates, and then wait for the waves to come and embrace them—whereat they shriek a little, but seem leastwise to enjoy the liberty thus taken with them, curtsying and bobbing a good deal.

The third and by far the largest class is made up of braw young men and bonnie maidens, who dash resolutely and fearlessly into the water almost up to their armpits, laughing, shouting, splashing, gesticulating wildly, and sometimes diving into a huge breaker as it towers over them,—only the bravest of the maidens daring to do this, and these only when they have some trusty gallant by their side. Sometimes these boys and girls (for such they are in spirit despite their age, running from sixteen to twenty) form a long row, hand-joined, and stand thus breasting the onset of the powerful waves in one glad togetherness for a long, long time. The fourth class, and much the smallest, numbers only the strong and lusty swimmers who go into the water with the athletic spirit, and who launch out into the briny deep far beyond all the others, beyond even the lifeboat which hovers on the scene, until only their heads are now and then visible as the ridged surface of the sea subsides.

But the scene often changes. The bathers come out of the water and sit or lie on the beach in select groups according to social



affinity, talking, laughing, chaffing. Some bury their feet, their legs, half their body, in the warm sand; some race up and down the strand; some play ball, girls as well as boys. Then these groups go back into the water, sporting again in the waves. This merry alternation between bathing and beaching goes on for an hour and a half, or maybe two hours, and then this swarm of wet merry-makers dissolves and walks home through the streets in parties of two or three or half a dozen, in some cases a mile or more. The prevailing costume of the feminine bathers is dark or plaid, consisting of a loose, low-necked blouse, trousers, stockings, and shoes of felt or tan. Now and then a girl, more daring or perhaps more self-unconscious than the majority of her sisters, appears barelegged and barefooted like all the men bathers, whereat nobody seems to be astonished or shocked. Some of the girls, those who are dowered with the fairest and richest locks, take off their oilskin caps and allow their hair to float free and wild as they saunter leisurely home. This captivating exhibition of their hirsute charms may well



plead a hygienic no less than an esthetic motive, since the hair dries quicker in such exposure to the sun and wind than it otherwise would, and the scalp is really benefited.

While all these bathing parties are of the most informal and even hilarious kind, I am bound to say, and glad to say, that real immodesty has never, so far as I have observed, shown its rude face among them in look, word, or action. One long romping playtime do these boys and girls have together, without fear and without reproach. Liberty always justifies itself when happiness and innocence lay claim to it. I have been an onlooker on these revels with pleasure and with sympathy, my only regret being that I myself was not young enough to join in them.

*July 24.*—It is my usual custom to greet the men and children whom I meet on the beach in my morning walks with a bow or a “Good-morning,” but to pass all the women without recognition of any kind—this last in deference to conventional usage. This morning I met a woman whom I judged to be on the shady side of forty years. She was a person whom I did not know at all, but as

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she gave me a direct and friendly glance I swept off my new white cap (which Carl says "looks quite nifty") and made to her a low bow, speechless and without slackening my pace. But as I saw that she halted and turned toward me, I stopped and stepped nearer to her, when she said,—

"Why did you bow to me, sir?" still looking friendly.

"Madam, it was a salute to the universe," I replied.

"Oh, then it was not meant for me, since I am not the universe," she said.

"Ah, but, madam, you are part of the universe, and part of the fairest part of it," I replied.

"Oh, thank you," she said, and walked away smiling.

And I walked away, also smiling. I have never seen her since, but in the name of the universe we have recognized each other's existence, and I daresay that no harm will come of it to either of us.

*July 26.*—The tide was so far on the ebb this morning, when I took my walk, that I was able to go close enough to the *Sindia* to

touch her steel frame with a sympathetic hand. Far out on the watery marge I could descry eight different kinds of craft, each proudly sailing or steaming on its appointed mission, regardless of their unfortunate sister ship now lying stranded on this fatal shore. Only a few years ago she was as proud a craft as any which plowed the sea, bearing an enviable record of successful service to every great port in the world; but now here she is, dead and forgotten, while they go careering on. How like human life is this! The living pause not for the dead. Necessity pricks them forward. The present hears the call of the future, and hastens away from the past. The most pathetic sentence in the drama of "Rip Van Winkle," and the only one, it is said, contributed to it by Joseph Jefferson himself, its world-famous actor, is this: "How soon we are forgot when we are gone!"

*July 28.*—A little before 11 o'clock this forenoon, Otilie and I started in the Regal auto for a drive on the continent. We went through Petersburg (no Saint *to* it, but perhaps there is one *in* it), a small village con-

sisting of a schoolhouse and three or four dwelling-houses, down to Tuckahoe Landing, and thence to May's Landing. Both of these small ports, whence agricultural products are sent where they are most needed, are on an arm or rather finger of the sea, which has a curious way of insinuating itself up into this immense marshy flat region in many directions. Here we turned about and started for home and luncheon, and had gotten within six miles of both when we stopped to pick some wild-flowers, which grow here in great profusion. The Regal had been behaving beautifully so far, as indeed it generally does under Otilie's skilful driving; but when we were ready to resume our journey, the Regal was of an opposite mind, refusing to breathe even a sigh of consent. Otilie exhausted her chauffeurish ingenuity on it all to no effect. The chauffeur of a passing car, being appealed to, did all he knew how to help us, but without the least success; our automobile still (very still) remained an auto-im-mobile. Then we signaled another passing car, and got its chauffeur to stop at a house half a mile ahead of

us and telephone to the garage in Ocean City, which houses our car, to come to our relief. This done, we resigned (or, rather, consigned) ourselves to waiting. I hadn't anything to smoke, and neither of us had anything to eat, and the flies and mosquitoes were eating us, and it was as hot as that place we have all heard of. Otilie, knowing of my story-telling function as a grandfather, asked me to tell her a story now to while away the time; so I took off my coat, and began a long one. About the time my story was finished, the relief car whirled into view. Within three minutes the experienced machinist had the Regal panting with life. Nothing much was the matter with her. A little bolt, or screw, or something (the devil knows what) had slipped out of place, and she couldn't breathe until that slip had been un-slipped. We had lost two hours and our patience. Mysterious is the automobile!

*July 29.*—Pudd'nhead Wilson said, "Consider well the proportion of things. It is better to be a young June-bug than an old bird of paradise." There spoke a man (Mark Twain) who had felt and knew the

difference between the thrilling joy of youth and the withering touch of old age; and not being a poet, but just a man of extra common sense, he didn't tell any pretty lies about it—he simply talked straight. When Robert Browning warbled—

“Grow old along with me,  
The best is yet to be”—

he either knew that he lied for rhyme's sake, or he must have been one of those early-ripe boys who never have known what it is to be young. One might as truly say that frost is better than sunshine, night better than day, winter better than spring, as that old age is better than youth. Frost chills and stiffens, night arrests activity, winter brings torpor and decay—and all these effects are produced by old age. Were I a poet I would tune my harp to celebrate life, love, laughter, health, and youth—not age, with its consequent decrepitude and decay.

*July 30.*—When Carl left us this morning it was with the expectation all around that he would return to us to-night; but about 11 o'clock he sent a telegram to Ottilie, saying

that unexpectedly he had been called to New York and didn't know when he should return. Great is business for ordering men about and disposing of their time and energy! When the modern business man kisses his wife good-by in the morning and runs to catch his train, he doesn't "almost always sometimes" know whether it will be eight or eighty hours before he can kiss her again. Business nowadays is well-nigh as peremptory, absolute, and even militant as war.

—There are quahaugs (cohogs is the popular pronunciation) enough on the beach to make a chowder for a score of good-sized families every noon in Ocean City. The holes dug to get these delectable mollusks scar the beach from end to end, but happily the next tide repairs these ravages. So too the successive waves of time obliterate many scars made on the human heart. To forget (if he can) is one of man's most saving qualities.

*July 31.*—In spite of my desire and effort to precede every one else on the beach in the morning, there is one old fellow who persists in getting there a few minutes before me.



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But though he is a younger man than I am by several years, he doesn't rise thus early to walk on the beach, as I do; he goes straight into the pavilion, takes his favorite seat in the northeast corner, and proceeds to fill and smoke a terrifically potent pipe. I know he does this on an empty stomach, because he goes home regularly to breakfast after an hour or so of quiet fumigation. I always give him my morning salutation, but rather under protest. I fancy he may be an old sailor now stranded, to whom a pipe would be as "fillin" as hardtack and salt horse.

### III.

*August 3.*—This morning, when I was walking on the beach, I overtook a man who was trudging slowly along in his shirtsleeves and barefooted, carrying his shoes in his hand with the stockings tucked into them. I said "Good-morning" to him as I passed him by; but he quickened his pace, saying, "You are out early for an old man," his eyes smiling.



"So are you for a young man," I replied, also smiling; he was about sixty, I judged. "Yes," he said; "but I've been out all night, watching the coast and the briny. 'Twas a heavy storm we had yesterday," glancing at the pounding breakers. "Do you belong to the life-saving service?" I asked. "Yes; but I'm goin' to quit it soon; I'm consid'able over fifty, an' I can't stan' it much longer," was his answer. "Well, I hope you will get a pension," I said. "I orter, but I dunno as I shall. They pension soldiers; but what do *they* do more'n I? They resk their lives, and I resk mine. They kill folks, and I save folks,—that's the difference," he said, rather gloomily. I agreed with him entirely, and added, "I know Mr. Kimball, your chief, and he thinks you fellows ought to be pensioned, and is trying to persuade Congress to do it." We had stopped in our walk during this conversation, and I now offered him my hand, with a little silver graciousness inside of it, and we parted.

*August 4.*—Otilie and I had a drive in the Regal of about eighty miles (round trip) on the continent this morning. We went to

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Wildwood, which is about eight miles north of Cape May. Wildwood is an attractive place; it has a fine beach, an extensive boardwalk, wide streets, and some first-class villas. Like Ocean City and Sea Isle City, Wildwood is on an island, and is reached from the mainland (as Ocean City is) by a long causeway stretching through an immense marsh and over a drawbridge. We took lunch in Wildwood, and then drove through the principal streets.

Always observing closely the region through which I pass, I have every time noted the unusual number of burying-grounds to be seen hereabout; and every one of them appears to be well filled. As the interior of this southern part of New Jersey is so monotonous and uninteresting, I don't wonder that its inhabitants have acquired a somewhat regular habit of dying; but it is to be regretted that they have not also fallen in with the increasing vogue of disposing of the lifeless body by cremation. Their scenery in itself is sufficiently uninviting without the added disfigurement of acres of ghastly gravestones.

—The boy or man who whistles, sings, and laughs when he works, or when he is all alone with himself, is incapable of treason, stratagem, or spoils. He is neither an unmitigated pessimist nor an essential sinner. He may be wicked sometimes as judged by conventional standards, but sin is a stranger to his soul. We don't have enough of merry laughter and fun in this world, where, as Byron says, "pleasure is sin, and sin is sometimes pleasure." To be dowered at birth with a keen sense of humor is better than to "get religion" in a prayer-meeting, for it saves its possessor from much shame and sorrow. To "laugh and grow fat" is not easier than to laugh and grow kind. I bless the man with my hearty benediction who can deftly tell a funny story or crack a good joke; and I have no bowels for that man who affects to despise a pun. If a pun is the lowest of all humor, it is because, as dear Charles Lamb says, it is the basis—not the basest—of all humor. I would rather hear a good pun than a poor prayer. Give us beauty and give us joy, and we shall surely then have peace and good-will among men.

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*August 5.*—It is amusing to watch the white-bellied little sea-snipes, as they flock in scores on the beach, picking up their dainty food which the wild waves bring to them. Perhaps shore-snipe would be a correcter term for them, but sea-snipe is the name by which they are known here. Certainly these feathered midgets here in evidence do not deserve the opprobrium implied in their name as used by Shakespeare in “Othello,” where he makes Iago say of Roderigo—

“Thus do I ever make my fool my purse;  
For I mine own gain’d knowledge should profane,  
If I would time expend with such a snipe  
But for my sport and profit”—

for they are no fools, but on the contrary are very cunning and adroit. I watch amusedly their lively antics every morning as I walk. Their movements are so agile that from a distance (and ’tis only from a distance that I can get to observe them, they are so shy) they seem to skate, instead of run, up and down the beach. They are plucky little bipeds, charging right into the face of an incoming breaker, and turning tail only when

it is ready to deluge them. They don't appear to mind getting their feet and feathery pantalets wet, but they do object to dragged tail-feathers and a soused back; and yet directly the wave has broken, and while it is still receding, they flash about and skate down into it after their prey before it shall be washed back into the briny deep. These snipe are not strictly aquatic birds, though they frequent the ocean and appear to depend on it to feed them. What they eat is a tiny clam, which is swept up on the strand by the rolling waves.

*August 6.*—I am glad that it has been my experience to live through and far away from in time the fierce and sanguinary war between the States of this republic, and to see the North and the South joined in bonds of mutual interest stronger than they ever were before. The recent celebration at Gettysburg gave a most impressive benediction to the final union in friendship of men who had been mortal enemies of one another on that bloody field of strife fifty years ago. Yet though this consummation of a peaceful settlement of former enmities is so gratifying

to me, I cannot be so blind to certain signs of the present as to dismiss all fear of future troubles for our country. These troubles will surely be of a somewhat different nature from those of the past, but they may not be less afflictive to our national happiness and welfare; indeed, they may be more so. I believe that we shall never have another war between different sections of our Union—we are too closely knit together by common interests to admit of that—but I am not so sure that we may not experience a mighty conflict between the different classes now huddled together in this country. The present growing alienation between capital and labor, between colossal wealth and desperate poverty, between economic radicalism and plutocratic conservatism, between imperial combination and free competition, seems as threatening as any portent which ever loomed on our nation's horizon. All this involves class interests, not sectional, but who can say that they are less dangerous to the peace of the country?

*August 7.*—We have, every now and then, a day down here which is full of dampness, and

it sets the rheumatism to aching in the frame of bones which I was born with. I suppose this is because I am the beloved of the Lord, for doesn't the Bible say that "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth"? and if there be any chastener more thorough in its business methods than rheumatism it has failed to come my way. On one of these damp, foggy days it occurred to me to ask the Lord to love me less and treat me better. I haven't yet heard from him in reply to my modest petition.

*August 8.*—We all had an early breakfast with Carl this morning, because Otilie and Fred were bound for Atlantic City in the automobile and wished to get away in the freshness of the morning. Otilie's errand thither is to secure her license as a chauffeur, for which she has hitherto had only a certificate of application. As Carl jokingly said, "She must either go to Atlantic City or go to jail." It seems that the city officials here, in view of the extraordinary increase in the number of automobiles operating on the island, have awakened to the necessity of rigidly enforcing the law that



all drivers of cars must be licensed chauffeurs, and the speed-limit must be strictly observed on all the streets. This is but right, and they should have acted earlier in this matter. There has been too much irresponsible and careless driving here of these rapid and ponderous vehicles, to the imminent peril of life and limb. What is the sense of prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquors, if automobilists are allowed to make these streets dangerous to walk in? An ordinary drunken man is far less inimical to citizen safety than a wild and reckless chauffeur.—Later. The dear little woman has returned triumphant, with her license in her pocket (no! women have no pockets; she brought it in her bag). She reports that she was subjected to a rigid examination in the driving of her car,—the licenser riding with her and requiring her to exhibit her skill as chauffeur in every conceivable particular; but she got the “Well done” verdict at last.

*August 9.*—Yesterday afternoon I saw a ruddy-faced, amiable-looking boy shooting sea-snipe, and this morning I didn't see a single one of these interesting birds on the



beach. I fear that they have been frightened away by this thoughtless, sporting youth. How can any father put a gun into the hands of his son without warning him never to use it in destroying bird life for the mere fun of "hitting the mark"? Sportsmanship *minus* the highest sense of individual responsibility is disreputable in boy or man. What we actually need in the realm of Nature we have a right to take, provided it has not already been fairly appropriated by another; but rapine and waste are criminal, and should be strongly condemned by public opinion. Because Nature herself is predatory is no reason why we should follow her bad example—that is, if we would be rational men and not beasts of prey.

*August 10.*—In the course of my long life I have known many persons who reminded me of nothing so much as the third letter in our English alphabet. The letter C has really no mission or message of its own, but always represents and speaks for either K or S. The men and women who don't do their own original and independent thinking, but who accept without doubt or question

the thoughts and opinions and even prejudices of others,—their parents, their political, religious, or social clan,—I call C-folks, because, like the letter C, they have no kindling, challenging mission or message of their own creation or discovery, but are mere representatives and spokesmen for some dominant influence under which they were born or by which they have been captured. In my interview with the clerical editor of one of the local journals here, he asked me what church I belonged to; and when I told him I didn't belong to any church, sect, or party, but that they all belonged to me,—that is, I was interested in them all as phases of human beliefs and activities, and found something to admire in each,—he appeared quite flabbergasted at my extraneity. He simply couldn't understand why I didn't "belong" to somebody or something other than myself. He was a C-man.

*August 11.*—On returning up the beach this morning from my customary early walk I met a young couple arm in arm,—the inevitable "man and maid." The wind was blowing fresh and strong, the waves were

noisy and sparkling. I felt unusually fresh and strong myself, and the maiden's eyes were dancing with the light of joy and warm life. Both she and her companion shot at me a kindling look, and irresistibly I paused, with uplifted hand, saying, "As you walk lightly among these tiny tenements of the dead," pointing to the shells under our feet, "let me repeat to you the closing lines of Holmes's 'Chambered Nautilus.'" As I finished the recitation, the maid pressed closer to the side of the man, and, looking straight into my eyes, said, "I think you are just splendid!" Abashed at this unexpected and misdirected exclamation, I replied, "Oh, no! Old age has lost its splendor; its fading day shines only with reflected light. But youth is splendid, and full of promise; and may the sentiment of these lines I have just recited, help to fulfil the splendid promise of your fair youth." I left them standing there, and I didn't look back!

*August 12.*—We have recently had an addition to our little family. The new-comer is a business man; yet he comes not to us on any business venture, but rather to

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escape from all its cares and burdens for a while. He comes to give his heart to loving fellowship, his mind to pleasing and edifying thoughts, and his vital forces to the stimulating tonic of sea-breezes and salt-water bathing. He is one of those efficient and successful business men who have a window in the top of their heads (may their number increase!), so that while their feet stand firmly on the earth they can occasionally indulge in an upward look,—a look which gives them views transcending mere commercial interests. His years, though they haven't yet hit the sixty mark, will entitle him, while he remains with us, to the rank of sub-patriarch in our family group, I of course being the premier in that function. Like me, however, he is juvenile in his sympathies; and he and Fred have formed a hydropathic partnership, and every day together they join the merry group of bathers. At other times Ottilie takes him in charge, and they whirl away together on long automobile rides on the continent,—thus enabling me to cultivate, among my other noble qualities, the virtue of self-sacrifice, since Ottilie's

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car was designed to promote only dual relations. When the sub-patriarch isn't otherwise more pleasurably employed, he sits with me on the piazza, and we have a good smoke-think together.

*August 13.*—The wind was southeast this morning when I took my early walk, and the boisterous sea spat its salt spume into my face; but, unlike Vichnu's dwarf friend Agastya, who was similarly insulted, I could not retaliate by drinking the ocean dry, as he did. I had to let it spit, and pocket the affront. Many long rows of seaweed were piled up along the beach, reminding me of the windrows I used to rake up in the mowing lot when I was a boy. This seaweed, as I told a laddie I met, was the hay which Neptune fed to his horses down in the stables of the sea. He looked wonderingly at me, so I had to tell him who Neptune was, and how he rode in and through the sea, in his chariot drawn by monster sea-horses. He appeared to be interested, but evidently this was a part of his theological education which had been neglected. But why? Surely, these old Greek myths and fables are as interesting

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as those found in the Bible, and they are quite as full of instruction.

*August 14.*—In my early walk this morning I had a pleasant interview, near the wreck, with an unusually intelligent young man. He was bareheaded and coatless, and as he approached me slowly and with a deferential air I gave him my “Good-morning,” thinking no more would come of it; but as he continued to draw nearer, as if inviting an interview, I said, pointing to the last advancing wave which had compelled me to retreat several paces, “It is useless to adopt the lofty Canutian tone of authority in the presence of the sea, and say, ‘Thus far, and no farther.’ We must do the retreating, or get our feet wet.” Then his face lighted up in a way which assured me of his intellectual quality, and we had some little conversation, in which I learned that he is, or was until recently, a college professor, but owing to a nervous collapse had been ordered by his physician out of his professor’s chair into the open. He is now camping out here in a tent, pitched among many others on a wide strip of sand above the boardwalk,

is taking sea-baths, and doing a lot of gentlemanly roughing. He was so interesting in tone and manner, and withal so mentally receptive, that I effused on him more than I am wont to do to a brand-new acquaintance. He asked me to call on him in his tent, but I shall not do so; for though a deaf man is always glad to be visited by agreeable persons who, knowing his infirmity, yet seek him in spite of it, he is naturally and very properly shy of paying visits. This young professor and I have let our minds accost each other, and now we go our way apart with a mutual pleasant and kind thought. Isn't that in itself a decided gain for both of us?

*August 15.*—The boys and girls down here are fertile in inventing ways of having “a good time” together. One of these ways is to build a big bonfire on the beach in the evening, at which they toast the demulcent marshmallow, and around which they circle, dance, and caper like so many Macbethan witches. As an onlooker I am exceedingly sympathetic, not desiring to abridge one bit of their fun. Black care is waiting for them out there in the coming



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years, and I am for applauding their efforts to keep him off as long as possible.

*August 16.*—The sub-patriarch and I went to a grand combination show this afternoon, our interest in it having been challenged by an elaborate parade which it made through our streets this morning. It is the union of a Wild-West show, a Hippodrome, and an Oriental exhibit. As Otilie and Fred had previous engagements, we two elderly boys formed a mere male procession by ourselves to the mammoth tent pitched on the baseball field. The show was worth seeing by any one interested in knowing how men and women of our own race lived in former half-civilized pioneer conditions, and how people of the Far East look and act to-day, and what marvelous things animals can be trained to do. It was a Life-show, and what is so interesting as life? The number of horses in the immense arena was extraordinarily large, and they were of the best of their kind. I love a good horse, and am not willing to say good-by to him because the automobile is so fascinating and serviceable. The horsemanship of the riders was superb, both of



the men and of the women, and was much aided by the intelligent and well-trained animals they rode. As for the elephant, the wonder never ceases at what he can be taught to do. I believe that man's superiority to what we call "dumb animals" has been lauded too indiscriminately. It is lucky for us that they are dumb, for if they could talk, what mighty nasty things they could truthfully say of us! Montaigne was right in asserting that we are indebted to these humbler of our relatives for many of the ideas out of which we have elaborated some of our great achievements.

*August 17.*—When Sunday comes, though I don't "go to meeting," I "dress up" and put on my "best clothes." If this is the result of vanity (and I don't think it is), the outcome is not bad. A complete sartorial transformation once in seven days at least has a good effect on a man's character; at any rate it has such an effect on his daily habits. It conduces to keeping him clean, outwardly if not inwardly; and if "cleanliness is next to godliness," then "dressing up" on Sunday really exalts a man.

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I remember that when I was a boy, living in the country, some of the old farmers, who hadn't had a bath during the whole week, or a shave, would go in swimming Saturday night or "have a tub" in the kitchen (for there wasn't then a bathroom in that whole town of over three thousand inhabitants), and then a good shave (for almost nobody wore beards then), because they were to put on a clean shirt and their "best clothes" Sunday morning, and wanted to have conditions "corroborate," as one of them said. They all felt more respectable for this cleaning up and dressing up innovation. One of these farmers (a jolly old fellow, an excellent neighbor, and a regular church-goer), being an inveterate tobacco-chewer, used to carry to church with him his cuspidor,—“spitbox” he called it, and it was a small, shallow, wooden box filled with sawdust. In defense of it he would say, “I kind er can't seem to enjie the sermon so well 'nless I can spit once in a while.” As my father's pew was next to his, it was one of my Sunday diversions during the long sermon to watch this old man and see how often he hit the mark.

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Now, although my tub is a daily one, I welcome my Sunday suit, and to save it from a possible wetting I take my Sunday morning stroll on the boardwalk instead of on the beach. Here, too, of a Sunday, the "dressed up" babies and little children roll in their carriages and patter along the clean floor. This morning I saw a young father pushing his bright, sweet baby in its chariot, and as he passed where I was sitting I said, "You couldn't possibly be better employed, sir; for these dear babies are the delicatessen of our human species down here. The world belongs to them, not to old fellows like me. To treat them well is our highest service." He smiled, and replied, "I reckon there is room enough in the world for them and you too."

*August 18.*—Ah! 'twas a precious time I had on the beach this morning. I found it in an unusually clean condition,—no long rows of seaweed or seashells, no rubbish of any kind, and the sand beaten down smooth and hard. I felt in extraordinary fine fettle myself. Somehow I seemed unconscious of having either legs or feet; I swung up my

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cane into the hollow of my hand, took off my cap, and just apparently floated along, taking with me my more than seventy-nine and a half years as if they were only seventeen and a half. First, I went straight down to my sad-fated friend the *Sindia*, not meeting a soul on the way, but having the sparkle of the crested waves in my eyes and the bracing tonic of the sea air in my lungs all the way. Opposite the wreck I encountered a young man, who came up and spoke to me in a low voice. "Avast there!" I said (as if I were a regular old salt), "wait till I get out my ears, which I carry in my inside coat-pocket." When I had produced my ear-gun I aimed it at him and said, "Now, please." He wanted to know how to hunt for quahaugs. I amiably instructed him in that art, and left him to engage in it.

On the upward stretch of my return on the beach I found myself walking instead of floating, this perhaps owing to the fact that I had somewhat by this time diminished the reservoir of energy which a night's rest had given me. About halfway up the strand I discovered under the boardwalk a battered

box left over from a last night's bonfire, and drawing it out on the beach I sat down on it the more deliberately to observe the grand spectacle before me. The sun had bored a red hole through the heavy morning mist, through which he now pushed his rubicund face and dropped a golden shaft on "the wrinkled sea." One end of that shaft lay at my feet, while the other stabbed the vaporous curtain hanging between the sky and the shimmering waters. The tide was on the flow, and the waves were advancing nearer and nearer, until one of them touched the toe of my boot. Then I knew it was time for me to quit, before the next ambitious roller should convert my improvised seat into an island. Dragging the box back under the boardwalk I strolled on up to the first pavilion, which afforded me a higher and dryer coign of vantage for oversight of Old Ocean's revelry. The ancient ante-breakfast smoker had had his pipe and gone home to his bacon and eggs. Only one woman shared with me the solitude of the pavilion, and she was as speechless an observer of the scene as I. When I went home

to my bacon and eggs, I carried a lighter heart and a clearer brain.

*August 20.*—This morning, soon after breakfast, Ottilie and I whirled away to the continent in the Regal. Her errand was to purvey for the house larder, and mine to be as agreeable company for her as possible. The six thousand people, more or less, in Ocean City would starve if they had not the adjacent continent to supply them with food. Not an edible is raised on this island; every square foot of it is held for building purposes, and is coined into financial assets for those who own the land. Every householder here looks to the long causeway over the marsh to bring daily supplies for his table. The “skeeter”-bitten farmer on the Jersey sand-plains bends his back and mops his brow to raise vegetables, eggs, and poultry for the near-by city and town folk. So Ottilie and I brought home heaps of things to eat which we bought of farmers’ wives and daughters, the men-folk being in the fields. Of course there are many provision stores in Ocean City, but aside from meats and fish they get their supplies mainly from the same source

where we got ours to-day. In going out, Ottilie called my attention to a place where only a small dam separates a fresh-water pond from a salt-water inlet. I dropped the remark that this struck me as a dam queer arrangement. As she loves me, she forgives me!

—As I sat alone on the piazza last evening enjoying my vesper cigar, two birds came flying directly toward me, and one of them, the smaller, dropped down on the arm of my chair, while the other, evidently the mother of this little one, flew through our piazza to that of the neighboring house, where it alighted to wait further developments. The baby bird seemed quite satisfied with his resting-place, and comically cocked his eye at me, and I seemed to hear him say, “Well, Mr. Man, what do you think of me?” I sat as motionless as he did, only cautiously removing the cigar from my mouth lest the smoke from it should frighten him. After several minutes of perfect silence had passed between us, I began to talk to him in a low, caressing voice. I told him he was a fine little birdie, and I was so glad he



had called to see me; that I hoped he would grow up to be a big, strong bird and able to fly as fast and as far as his mother could; that he must always mind his mother and keep out of bad company, for there were bad birds as well as bad boys and men; that when he grew up and got married, as I hoped he would, he must treat his wife and all lady birds with great kindness and consideration, demanding that they should have equal voice and vote with him in all bird matters; and finally that his mother was getting very anxious about him, and now that he had got well rested he might better go and join her on the flight home to his nest, but to come again and see me whenever he found me alone. He sat very still while I was talking to him, replying only with that comical cocking of his eye, and then, finding that I had no more to say to him, he flew to his mother, and they both disappeared in the deepening darkness.

*August 21.*—"The breaking waves dashed high" this morning as I walked on the beach. The strong east wind which has been blowing for two days had whipped them into an



uproar, and they came bellowing in with fury on their faces. As they broke on the shore, the pursuing wind cuffed off their white heads and sent them glistening through the air. Far out over the watery plain I could see Old Ocean lifting his broad shoulders and plunging forward as if he meant to drown the land. Indeed, not many years ago he held a considerable portion of this island subject to his sway. The site of the cottage in which I am sojourning here was then covered by several feet of water. But he has gradually contracted his domain, and been generous to the city in extending its littoral possessions. At any time, however, he may repent of that generosity and recoup a part or the whole of his gift. The Atlantic coast has undergone great changes in the past, and it may undergo even greater in the future. The feud between land and sea is of long standing and incessant.

*August 22.*—On my way down the beach this morning I came on two half-naked, brown-skinned lads who, with tremendous industry, were building a sand-fort. I stopped to inspect their work for a minute,

and then said, "That's right! build it big and strong, for Dick Hobson says the Japs are coming over here with a monstrous fleet to make war on us with their battleships, and if your fort is big enough and strong enough it will save Ocean City from being destroyed by them." One of the brown chaps sprang to his feet, and with blazing eyes shouted, "When are they coming?" Looking wild-eyed myself, I replied, "Oh, they may be here any day—perhaps to-day; go to it!" He flung himself down on his knees again, and the two began to dig fiercely with their hands and heap up their frail ramparts, all oblivious that the incoming tide would soon level them. As I left the lads and walked on, I asked myself if this scare of invasion which I had just roused wasn't as real and serious as any we are likely to have in this country?

*August 23.*—Another foraging expedition to the continent to-day with Ottilie in the Regal. What a monotonous life these farmers must have in this uninteresting flat section of New Jersey! It is so uninteresting as to be really comical. It keeps me wondering

if the people here ever see it in that light, if they ever joke or laugh any at their own situation, if they ever do anything but work, and wait for their turn to be carried to some one of these well-filled graveyards yawning at them hereabout. Come to think of it, they must have at least two excitements indigenous to their soil; one is when they have a mosquito bite, and the other when they shake with ague. Both of these, I fancy, should be able to give them a lively moment now and then. I observe also that they are well supplied with churches, in which they are probably told of the joys awaiting them in heaven; and this, I hope, helps to reconcile them to work and wait here.

These wide marshes grow some beautiful wild-flowers, and to-day I noticed that the goldenrod is beginning to lighten up some of the roadsides. Do the farmers, I wonder, ever pause in their toil to look at these beauty challengers? Some of their wives do I am sure, because here and there I see a flower-bed in their front yards, and a flowering vine trailing over a door or window. The signs of the love of the Beautiful crop

out in some most unexpected places—oftener, perhaps, than signs of the love of the True and the Good. But the members of this adorable Trinity are apt to keep within hailing distance of one another.

*August 24.*—The sub-patriarch left us this morning. He has been with us just two weeks—a blessed fortnight it was to all concerned. I was as sorry to have him go as I was glad to have him come. We have had some dear communion together on high themes, and have found much in common. He, too, has enjoyed his informal visit with us, entering with equal readiness into its varying phases of serious intercourse and social relaxation; and now as he goes back to New England I am confident that he carries with him some pleasant and emollient memories, which will make his business harness easier to wear. Every active business man and toiler in the constant routine of duties should thus quit his customary environment, not once a year, but as often as he feels the joints of his harness wearing into the fiber of his mind and soul. He should hie himself to some quiet haunt of Nature, where she makes

her careful toilet in her choicest vestments, unmindful of any observing eye; or he should seek some friendly circle where kind appreciation and hearty sympathy are eager to welcome him, and where he can bathe his jaded spirits in the rich fount of human affection. Both his work and the world he serves will gain by this quickening and refreshing of his vital forces. May the time come when one-half of the world will be willing to change places with the other half, so that each in turn may have a glad vacation!

*August 25.*—The sea was unusually placid this morning, under the soothing influence of a northwest wind blowing all night. The tide was well on the ebb, and the waves appeared to have force enough for only a moderate uplift, their final touch upon the beach seeming but a mere caress. Two ghostly sails glided noiselessly along the horizon as if they feared to be seen and questioned; even the lusty night-wind had so far calmed its temper or fulfilled its purpose that it was now speaking to the sea in mild and friendly tones. Over all this

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scene the blue sky was gently brooding, while to it the rising sun was giving the new day's silent greeting. I found my own mood in keeping with the general environment. I felt languid and pensive. Thoughts and memories were crowding upon me, sinking my mental tone into the minor key. I steered clear of every straggler on the beach, almost resenting his presence there. I wanted to be severely solitary. I wanted the subdued scene all to myself, with no other eye or ear to witness or regard it than my own.

How strange is the weather of the soul! More strange is it than that of the material world. There are no skies so dark as those which sometimes cloud the human mind, no storms so fearful as those which sometimes rage in the human breast, no floods so engulfing as those of human emotions, no cold so paralyzing or heat so withering as the human sense of despair and loneliness; and on the other hand there is no silence in Nature so profound as the peace which sometimes visits the human heart, no outward scene of beauty so enticing as that

which sometimes dazzles the human imagination. The microcosm contains in miniature all which the macrocosm holds; and one thing more,—a being torn with pangs and thrilled with pleasures!

*August 26.*—Fred had a breakfast party here this morning of half-a-dozen girls, all of whom sat down to the table in their bathing suits. Later they joined the great group of bathers. They were all jolly and interesting specimens of that type so much admired and sought after by young men.

—Poor, contemptible Harry Thaw! He is both pitiable and despicable. The press of the whole country is swelling its columns with an account of his antics, which titillate one half of its readers and disgust the other half. What a pity that when so many valuable lives are being destroyed every year on land and sea, through the folly of man or the brutality of Nature, this graceless, hare-brained creature couldn't be included among them! He may not be crazy, but he is worse than that so far as his social *status* is concerned: he is a hopelessly worthless ne'er-do-well. Never in any manner or degree



has he justified his right to exist; never has he earned a meal or a night's repose—and yet he has had nearly one hundred thousand dollars to squander annually on himself and feed fat his caprices and passions. He is a human derelict floating on life's sea, a peril to all useful craft. How proud his Maker must be of him, and of millions more of his vermicular species!—What is that I hear in dissent of this? His Maker didn't make him, you say? Logically then perhaps there is no Maker, no Creator, at all. Let us hope so; for then the responsibility for producing such poor human stuff as the Harry Thaws is our own, and the duty is upon us to permit no more such miserable by-products to escape from our social loins.

*August 27.*—It is useless for any one to think or to try to get out of Nature more than he puts into her, to find in her more or other than he has in himself. He cannot see anything exquisitely beautiful or magnificently grand in any of Nature's aspects unless he has in his own nature a sense and keen perception of these qualities. The onlooker upon Nature must pos-



sess the poetic, the romantic vein, or she will reveal to him nothing but her dynamic and static character. If he has a soul in himself, he will find a soul in her; if he consists only of a rattling frame of bones, he will discover in her nought but a gigantic skeleton. In other words, without imagination,—the faculty to create what doesn't really exist or is only objectively hinted,—we stand before Nature practically blind and deaf.

It has long been my conviction that the highest form of religion is to be found in the capacity to enjoy and interpret Nature through the aid of a vivid and cultivated imagination. I do not speak now of ethics, which is commonly regarded as a part of religion, but which has no necessary connection with it, since ethics properly means the science of right conduct toward man, wholly irrespective of any supposititious being called God. An atheist or a pantheist can be, and often is, guided in all his social relations by as high ethical considerations as any theist or Christian ever was. I have in mind at present that exalted form of re-

ligion which such so-called materialists as Thomas H. Huxley, John Tyndall, and Ernst Haeckel could and did accept,—the ability and the disposition to hold a poetic conception of the universe, to see in its stupendous mystery elements of beauty and sublimity as well as of terror and of gloom, which kindle in the imaginative beholder not only breathless wonder, but a kind of reverent awe.

I am sometimes commiserated that in these closing years of my life I have no “faith in God.” Bless your kind hearts, Mr. and Mrs. and Miss Pityme! I am far better off than you are; for my theological system is not so bareribbed as to have only one God to celebrate,—a lonesome, solitary, unsociable, indefinite God, whom you call the Infinite and Eternal, and who therefore is by his very nature the inconceivable, the unthinkable, the unknown and unknowable God, whom (as the Bible says) “by searching cannot be found out.” Like the poetic and highly imaginative old Greeks, I have many Gods. The universe, this world, is full of them, all alive with them, all revealing

themselves to me wherever I turn my eyes. I cannot escape from them; they beset me behind and before, and all around. When I walk here on the beach, the ocean, Neptune, is my God, majestic and mighty; I bow down before him, I hail and adore him. When the stormy wind blows, and Old Ocean feels and submits to its powerful sway, then Æolus is my God, and commands my homage. When the sun appears, and drives the wind away on a chariot of clouds, and bids the sea be still, then Apollo is my God, and I turn toward him my adoring gaze. When the night blots out the day, and the moon leads in her starry host, then Nocturne and Diana have me in thrall, their solemn darkness and chastened light filling me with reverence and with awe. When Venus is the evening star, and her light "so holy shines," then she is my Queen of the heavens, and I am thrilled and subdued by the pure radiance of her supernal beauty. When I am in the meadows and the fields, where the grass and the corn are growing, and the running brooks are murmuring, and the singing birds are mating, then

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“Universal Pan,

Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance,”

is my God, and my spirits leap with delight to his piping reeds. When I am among the mountains, the hills, the darkened woods, the shimmering lakes, the industrious rivers, then a host of lesser deities—nymphs, naiads, oreads, elfins, fairies—swarm about me and fill my mind with fascinated thoughts. Wherever beauty, grace, grandeur, mystery reign, there I find my gods and goddesses appealing to me.

This Religion of Nature is the true catholic religion. Moreover, so far as I have been able to observe, it is the only religion which discards cant and is free of the tendency to make its devotees either cowards, sycophants, dogmatists, or hypocrites, and which does not date its beginning from the birth of some man or the publication of some man-made book.

*August 31.*—For the first time in my ante-breakfast walks Old Ocean denied me the use of the beach this morning. He was occupying it himself. For several days now we have been having a series of high tides, in

which the mad waves have in places crashed to the foot of the high embankment of Ocean Avenue, causing some of the campers between the boardwalk and the avenue to "fold their tents like the Arabs," and hastily not "silently steal away." I was driven to the boardwalk for my morning stroll, since otherwise I should have been engulfed to the knees in disdainful brine. Coming opposite the *Sindia* I stopped to see how she was sustaining the violent attacks of the ocean. Her steel ribs and her one standing tall mast were holding out sullenly against their enemy; but, as if enraged by their valiant resistance, he was voiding his insolent spume at them, spouting it twenty feet into the air. Spying here what seemed yet to be a dry area on the beach, and thinking that it might prove for several minutes to remain immune from the tide, I descended to it the better to watch the unequal battle between the *Sindia* and the sea. I intended to keep a wary eye all the time upon the advancing tide, ready to flee at any moment when it became imminent; but in my interest in the wrecked vessel I forgot self-interest, and in this unwary

mood I suddenly found myself standing ankle-deep in water. For about sixty seconds the old gentleman performed some lively motions in withdrawing from his damp surroundings to the dry security of the boardwalk, where he emptied his shoes and wrung out his stockings—and decided to go home to breakfast.

## IV.

*September 3.*—To-day we have had an excursion party of five to Cape May, with two automobiles to carry us. Otilie drove one, and our visitor Lilian the other. Judging from my own experience with chauffeurs of both sexes, I should say that women drivers can be as competent and conscientious as men drivers. To-day I rode with Lilian, and she handled her fine car with a practiced hand. As I have remarked before, there are many dangerous railroad crossings hereabout, and it takes an alert eye and ear to pass them in safety. At my time of life one needn't mind being killed, if it could be done outright and suddenly with neatness and dis-

patch, for in that case one would have no opportunity to regret it; but to have one's body bruised, mangled, and perhaps divaricated completely—that is another and decidedly objectionable fortuity. However, both Otilie and Lilian have passed and re-passed these danger-points many times, and I feel reasonably safe with either as a driver.

Fred was in our car, its one seat being amply broad enough to accommodate three amiable persons quite cosily. And we were all amiable, Fred especially so, for this is her birthday, and this is her birthday party. She is so young that it is safe to tell her age out loud. She is just twenty to-day—"sweet and twenty," as Tennyson sings. But though she is only twenty, she "acted like sixty." She laughed and gurgled and sang, and she would have danced if she could have balanced herself in the rapidly moving car; failing to do that, she kept her feet moving to her own music. I laughed with her, for my memory helped me to know how delicious it is to be only twenty.

I saw more of Cape May on this excursion than I did on a previous one, for we drove



along the whole length of the avenue running parallel with the magnificent beach and the extensive boardwalk. One end of this avenue is far less courtly than the other, being of a popular nature in every respect. If the milords and miladies practice social exclusiveness at the court end, *hoi polloi* retort with disdainful heels at the other—and so the social balance between democracy and aristocracy is preserved even at so haughty a resort as Cape May.

*September 4.*—At the end of my downstretch on the beach this morning I divagated from my usual return to make an informal call on “the mother and the child.” The mother, when she herself was a child, was one of my dear little-girl friends. I used to hold her on my knee, tell her “a story,” and sing to her my little-girl song of “Kittie Klyde.” I have carried her on my back upstairs to her bed, and been sweetly rewarded with a good-night kiss. Now that charming child is the charming mother of a most winsome boy baby, a year and a half old. This morning I was permitted to be present when “little Billy” was prepared for



his bath, to take the disrobed cherub in my arms and carry him to his tub, thence to convey him back in a warm blanket to his bedroom, where he was robed for his morning nap, and then to put him in his crib and see him close his eager lips around his milk-bottle, waving a good-by to me with his little hand as his eyelids slowly drooped in thorough contentment with the situation. It was as "holy" a scene as any I saw in European cathedrals.

For many years I have been an inconspicuous protagonist of the equal civil and political rights of women with men—not because they were women, but because they were human beings, and because I believe that all mankind should, so far as practicable, possess equal privileges and opportunities for individual improvement and social service. I am not so fatuous as to believe that everything will be "perfectly lovely" in the State or Nation when woman suffrage is everywhere achieved. Women are no better than men, and men no better than women. They are only different—different in capacities and powers; and because they are different, both

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are needed to do all the work of civilizing mankind in private and in public life. But while I am in favor of encouraging every woman to choose the nature of her work, and where and how it shall be done—just like men in this respect—I believe that it will prove to be only the exceptional woman who will choose publicity rather than privacy as her sphere. Considering her sex capacity, I am decidedly of the opinion that woman is better fitted to serve society in the home than on the hustings or in the chair of state, and that the truly feminine woman will always more rejoice to be a happy wife and mother than to be a proud governor or president. And to this end I believe that one of woman's rights should be the same freedom to ask the man she loves to be her husband, as it is now the man's to ask the woman he loves to be his wife. Why not, pray? Is there anything in the radical nature of either which demands that this privilege should belong to the one more than to the other? No! the objection to sex equality in this one particular lies in the stupid, brutal, conventional prejudice that man in his intercourse with woman

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should be the sole initiator and dominator. I believe that there are as many bachelor girls and women in this country to-day who would be glad to become wives and mothers, as there are ambitious ones who are panting for a public career. Open the door of choice to both, I say; and let us have done with man's exclusive sexual as well as political rights. Let every year be leap year.

I have been moved to these last remarks by the call which I made on "the mother and the child," and by the fact that it has been my blessed and sanctified privilege to have had a beautiful mother and a noble wife.

*September 5.*—On my beach walk this morning I came upon a group of four little girls playing busily in the soft sand which the tide had not yet reached. It was booming in, and the girls knew it, and they were making the most of their present exemption from its invasion. As I came opposite to them I saw that they were sketching pictures of houses in the sand and writing names under each. As a rule I find children disposed to be affable with me, and so I stopped to speak to this child quartet.

"What nice houses you have made!" I said. "Are you going to live in them? If you are, I think I should like to come and make you a visit."

They all stopped work and looked at me amusedly. "I am a grandpa," I continued, "and have three small grandchildren who are spending their summer by the sea. I wonder if they are building sand-houses like these, and if they have made a room in them for me."

Now they all came nearer to me, and one—a blue-eyed, brown-haired girl—asked, "Do your grandchildren live in Ocean City?"

"No; they are hundreds of miles from here, up in Massachusetts."

"What are their names?" she asked.

"I will tell you their names if you all will tell me yours."

"There they are," she said, pointing to the houses in the sand.

I read the names aloud,—“Elizabeth, Miranda, Susan, Flossie. But which is which?” I asked, as I pointed to each name and girl.

She made this all plain to me, and it turned out that the smallest girl's name was Flossie,

who had been busy putting on her stockings and shoes, and had now just taken her place in the line. She had black eyes and an abundance of flossy dark hair.

"Well, my grandchildren's names are Ruth, Alec, and Professor Highbrow."

They all laughed when I spoke the last name, and Elizabeth said, "What did his folks name him that for?"

"They didn't. I gave him that name myself, because he has such a broad, high forehead, such big round eyes, and because he thinks so much. His real name is Barrett, but he likes to be called Professor."

Then Miranda asked, "What does he think about?"

"Oh, I fancy it must be about the universe," and I waved my hand in a big circle over my head and looked up into the sky.

"That is a funny thing to think about," she said, looking at me a little wonderingly, and the others evidently agreed with her.

"Yes, the universe is funny when we see it in a cage of chattering, tricky monkeys, or in two kittens playing together and rolling over each other; but it is wonderful too,

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mighty wonderful, when we see it in the big ocean or the starry skies; and because the universe is both funny and wonderful is the reason, I reckon, why Professor Highbrow thinks about it so much."

"How old is he?" asked little Flossie.

"Six years last May," I replied, and was about to ask how old she was when—

"Look out! there's a big wave coming!" shrieked Miranda, and the four of them who stood facing me while my back was toward the tide, of whose stern purpose I had become oblivious, made a dash for Ocean Avenue, shouting back to me, "Good-by! we're going home to breakfast."

By remarkable octogenarian celerity I escaped a serious immersion, and went home to my breakfast.

*September 8.*—Water is a great, patient, and elegant artificer. I had some dim perception of this fact when I was a boy, sitting on the top of a big rock to which I had waded through a brawling forest stream which had its source in the uplands far in the rear. This was one of my favorite resorts in those happy days of dreamy childhood. I used to wonder

how long it had taken the water to round off the corner of that slippery old boulder and to polish the smaller stones which were shining up to me from the bottom of the brook,—the latter just the right size, to my thinking, to have been put into David's sling. Now in my old age, as I walk on this ocean beach every morning, I have a new and larger lesson of the power of water to shape and fashion things with which it comes in contact.

Fire and water have been the chief architects of this planet. They have builded its mountains and spread out its plains; they have molded the size and form of its continents, and divided and distributed its islands; they have scooped out immense pits for its oceans, smaller ones for its lakes, and plowed troughs for its rivers. These great things they have done, and the little things they have not left undone. Some of the little things which water alone has accomplished I have repeatedly been delighted to observe in my beach walks. The incoming and outgoing tides work their fantastic will on this sandy shore, and every now and then I have to stop and consider what they have done.



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One morning I discovered a succession of niches or recesses neatly scooped out in the beach, containing a great variety of nicely delineated forms of leaves, trailing vines, flowers in bud and blossom, scarfs, scrolls, banners, etc. In some of these niches there was a mass of such fine, delicate, web-like tracery that I had to get down on my knee to examine it. They were patterns which would please and puzzle any woman to imitate. In one large niche I was astonished to find the huge form of a man with a monstrous head, shaggy hair and beard, arms, but no legs. It seemed as though I had come upon a *basso-relievo* of Neptune himself, which the sculptor had not had time to finish. And all this was "the frolic architecture" of water working only with the evasive material of sand!

*September 9.*—Thermometers and barometers! What a change! The mercury has plunged from its high perch of 90 yesterday down to 72 to-day, and the change came like the snap of a stage-driver's whiplash. I don't like it. I would rather sweat than shiver, any time.



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*September 10.*—To-day gives us even colder weather than yesterday's. The mercury this afternoon looks ashamed of itself at 66.

Notwithstanding the cold spell which has come so suddenly upon us, my beach walk this morning was glorious in its setting and its effects. The sun was shining splendidly, the sea was blue and calm, the air was pure and bracing, the beach was clean and firm, my spirits were nimble and elastic, my pace was quick and striding, and I had the scene all to myself, with the benedictory sky brooding over it and me. For the time being the whole universe seemed friendly to me, and I looked it in the eye without fear and without shame. I felt "all there," as the English say, and the cosmic sense was supreme.

*September 11.*—There are three things which every man must have enough of or die. Those three things are food, clothing, and shelter; and before he is willing to die for the lack of them he will fight for them with the clamoring tongue, or with such weapons as he can lay his hands to. We are none of us responsible for our birth. We did not ask to be born, and our consent was not secured to that

event taking place. Once here, however, we have a natural right to be taken care of,—that is, to be given a good chance to grow and to fulfil all our native functions. If our parents cannot or will not do this for us, then society, which allowed our parents to beget us, is bound by all honorable obligations to do it. If somebody doesn't do this for us, and do it alertly and adequately, or if death doesn't interpose to squelch our rightful claim, look out for trouble! for it is sure to come.

The cry of the new-born infant for this human care is but the initial slogan of that great army of the hungry, the naked, the houseless, which has tramped up and down the earth ever since the phrase "human society" was coined. Allow all which we must allow for constitutional laziness, shiftlessness, incompetence, and degeneracy in the production of human woe and suffering, we still have to admit that there are millions of men and women who by no fault of their own have been conscripted into the army of those who lack the bare necessities of life, and who because of this have been driven to crime or

suicide. Not alone are ambition, vainglory, and a lust for gain responsible for war and all its horrors; those who feel the tightening grip of social injustice are also eager for it, because they feel that in a rough-and-tumble conflict with society they stand some chance of getting out of it better terms for themselves. The ferocious tiger who has had his ample supply of bloody meat is as unpredacious an animal as his congener, the petted household cat; so, too, the man who knows that his three daily meals are reasonably sure of regular continuance, and who feels fairly prosperous and happy, is a hopeless subject for the enlisting officer to tackle or for the walking delegate to befuddle. He is burning with no sense of wrong. He doesn't want to fight or strike. He wants peace and plenty of it, with his neighbor and all mankind.

Let those who are so desirous to Christianize the world and to put a stop to war, think on these things. You can't make a good man out of a starving one, or a peaceable man out of one who has no work and no wages. The belly's rights are prior to those of the soul or the conscience. If any well-disposed and

well-qualified individual cannot live in comfort and happiness on this earth because somebody is crowding him and filching from him, then hatred, strife, and war are inevitable and even righteous conditions. Neither gospel nor peace tracts will help the situation; only a scientific economic system which will guarantee to every man his due and special favor to none, will do it. Men and brethren all! let us think on these things and get wise.

I think I should hardly have been led into the foregoing reflections had I not all this summer been observing the throng of babies, children, and young folks on this beach, and wondering what their future was to be—whether it was to prove that their birth into this life was a happy or a calamitous event for themselves and others.

*September 13.*—The aspect and condition of the beach are almost as changeful as those of the sea. Sometimes I find it soft and spongy, disagreeable to walk on; at other times it is hard, dry, and as smooth as a floor. Sometimes I find it in wretched disorder, littered with clotted heaps and long rows of wet seaweed, slimy foam, piles and piles of shells

little and big, mangled bodies of dead fish, broken spars, remnants of wooden buckets, and once the ribs of a wrecked row-boat; and perhaps the next morning all these unsightly objects have vanished, and the beach from end to end is as spick and span as a neat housewife's kitchen in the afternoon. Some mornings, when the tide is high, I stop and delightedly watch the thin, receding waves go sliding and rippling down the strand; again, on other mornings when the tide is well out, when the air is wrung dry of its humidity and the wind is gusty, with equal delight I pause to observe the loose sand swept along the smooth beach in little flounces and streamers, as new-fallen dry snow sometimes drifts over the frozen surface of winter's earlier deposits. Never a morning but I find some interesting change in the littoral, something new to note and ponder on. The Atlantic Ocean has to do a lot of housecleaning for three continents, to say nothing of numberless islands, large and small. The amount of discard which it has to receive and dispose of from all these is beyond computation. No eight-hour day would suffice for the task, but

every one of the twenty-four hours is needed to do the job.

*September 14.*—We have been glad to-day to have a fire on the hearth, and all of us have courted it with decided signs of satisfaction. This is the first time this season when we have needed such a material comforter. Yet is fire only material in its nature? Some of the ancients thought that it possessed a soul, and that it originally was brought from heaven. Beyond question, fire has warmed not only the body of man, but it has kindled into flame many of the finest emotions of his heart. "While I was musing, the fire burned," says the old psalmist. He might better have said, "While the fire burned, I mused;" for though the fire was not the cause of his musing, it surely was the occasion of it and a real auxiliary thereto. This every one knows who has ever sat alone before an open fire and found himself "rapt in nameless reverie."

A home without a fireside is almost unthinkable. No hole in the floor called a "register," no upright ornamented thing called a "radiator," can be the nucleus of a family circle. The old New England fireside,

before stoves and furnaces were introduced, what a precious and sacred place it was! As the night's shadows thickened over wood and wold, the entire family gathered in front of the spacious, yawning chimney which breathed out its genial warmth to the whole circle, making them regardless of the bitter cold without and the wild raving of a winter's storm. The long, high-backed settle was drawn up in front of the fire, on which the children ranged themselves according to affinity, for in a large family every sister is apt to have a favorite brother, and every brother a favorite sister. The mother sits in her chair near the head of the settle, with her knitting in her hands and that lurking smile in her eyes so easily evoked, while the sire and the grandsire occupy their favorite nooks at opposite chimney corners. Some apples are roasting on the hearth, emitting from time to time resentful little puffs as their rosy skins are cracked by the heat, and a bowl of nuts prepared for the occasion is passed along the line of children. Perhaps a story is told by the aged grandsire, culled from his experience as frontiersman and as a



soldier in the Revolutionary army; all the children have heard it before, yet they listen to and enjoy it the second, third, or even fourth time as much as at the first. Perhaps a song is sung by the eldest sister in her clear, strong, and pleasing though untrained voice, her favorites being—

“The rose that all are praising  
Is not the rose for me”—

and “Ye banks and braes o’ bonny Doon;” or perhaps the grown-up son sings the last new song he has learned, “The Sexton,”—a song which his mother likes, albeit she always gets a little “teary round the lashes” as he sings it, the sexton having taken from her some of her own flock. Perhaps at the close of the evening a hymn is sung by the whole family, and then the good-night kisses are sure to be given as the circle breaks up. Ah, one is almost reconciled to being very old when one has such a memory as this to carry about in one’s mind!

*September 15.*—The mercury stood at 60 degrees and the west wind blew strong in my face as I took my walk this morning.



I have allowed neither wind nor weather to keep me off the beach any morning now for three whole months, and the health, pleasure, and inspiration these saunterings by the sea have given me are a sufficient reward for all effort at early rising. My walks are now more solitary than ever. It is seldom that I meet or pass any other stroller on the beach. Fully two-thirds of the summer sojourners here have gone back to their homes. I do not mourn much their absence, except in the case of the babies and the children. These I loved, and with them I have had some pleasant passages,—a smile, a nod, a wave of the hand, perhaps a word or two. May love and safety and happiness be their future lot! For a few more days I shall linger here, and then I too shall become fugacious.

*September 16.*—I have found that a fairly good rule to follow in one's life is this: Try always to do what is right, what appears to one to be right at the time, and then never make any excuses for failure beyond simply saying, "I am sorry." The theological virtue of repentance is no virtue at all. It is a vice. It needlessly abases the self-

accuser, and denies to him that degree of self-respect necessary to the upbuilding of character. An abject and groveling abasement of one's self before an imagined Being whom we are supposed to have offended, is as uncomplimentary to the presumed might and majesty of that Being as it is demoralizing to ourselves. I have heard men in prayer call themselves by opprobrious names which they would indignantly resent if applied to them by their neighbors. I once heard a clergyman quote the following lines in a prayer he was making for the "salvation" of himself and flock,—

"Can such a worthless worm as I,  
Who sometimes am afraid to die,  
Be found at Thy right hand?"—

and I mentally responded, "It is certainly to be hoped not, for if such a 'worthless worm' as you are should be found at the right hand, it will surely make the left hand a more desirable quarter." This is a kind of religious demeanor disgraceful in the eye of heaven and of earth. The only being whom we really can harm or offend is man, and when

we have injured him—be “him” our fellow or ourself—a gentlemanly apology, a sincere desire never to do so again, and reparation so far as practicable, is all which self-respect or social ethics requires of us. We cannot always do right even if we try to, for besides our own shortsightedness there are many limitations in the very nature of things to our power either to do right or wrong. The most which can be demanded of any one in this weirdly precarious life, is the constant cultivation of both the desire and the will to do all the good one can and as little harm as possible. A clear head, a warm heart, and a ready hand are the supreme requisites to this end.

*September 17.*—When the tide is booming in it often sweeps up on the beach swarms of little fishes, some of whom find it difficult to turn about in time to take advantage of the receding wave and thus avoid being stranded. 'Tis amusing yet pitiful to watch their frantic efforts at self-recovery, and I always hasten to their assistance whenever I see that they need it. I have noticed that the small boys here have not always been so considerate.

They have waded in with tin pails in their hands and scooped up these finny midgets, and emptied them, water and all, into the deep pitholes they had dug in the sand, pleasing themselves with thus having a private aquarium of their own. Of course the fish soon die in consequence of this ruthless sequestration, and I have lamented their sad fate. But I have reflected that these boys after all were no more pitiless than Nature herself, who gives over these minnows in countless numbers, even in their native element, as prey to their larger species. It is doubtful if man in his most malicious moods has ever outdone Nature in ferocity and cruelty.

*September 18.*—At 10 o'clock this forenoon Ottilie and I started for Atlantic City in the Regal, making the distance—some forty-five miles—in a little less than two hours, threading on our line of travel Tuckahoe, May's Landing, Pleasantville, and several small villages. The roads for the most part were in prime condition, and, barring a few curves, as straight as an arrow. We seemed to fly rather than roll, and the exhilaration of it all was tingling to the nerves. Ottilie says she

likes to have me for a passenger because I don't bother her by talking to her. Yes, I know better than to keep my mouth open when I am whizzing through the air at that rate, inviting all the Jersey road microbes to come in and feel at home.

Atlantic City, like Ocean City, is on an island, and it is the most popular seaside resort on this coast, apparently being very prosperous and flourishing. This is my third or fourth visit to the place, and once I sojourned here for a couple of weeks. I can't say that I like Atlantic City. It appeals to the senses, but not to the soul. It impresses me as noisy, showy, and fast—indeed, as distinctly spectacular and sensational. It is a fruitful field for policemen and private detectives. I much prefer the quieter, safer, and more orderly Ocean City, where babies, children, maidens, and mothers play, frivol, and rest all in peace and cozy security. Returning we came through the pleasant village of Northfield, where there is a fine 18-hole golf ground and an equally fine clubhouse. Ocean City has no golf links within convenient distance.

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*September 19.*—I have “had my picture taken.” I thought I wouldn’t go away from Ocean City, where I have been so well and so content, without seeing just how I look as the result of it all. As I never shave or go a-courting, I don’t spend much of my time looking in my mirror. I prefer to study other faces than my own. Besides, a mirror doesn’t give one the same impression of one’s self that a photograph gives. The latter is generally a distinct surprise to the sitter. In looking at it he feels as if he were being introduced to himself for the first time, and he isn’t quite sure whether he likes the new face or not. The photograph shows us how we look to others, while the mirror shows us how we look to ourselves. That is the difference between them, and it isn’t always easy to tell which is the counterfeit presentment. Having secured this picture, and the taking of another being most unlikely, I think I will paste it into my Diary, that my grandchildren may have it to look at when the original is no longer present with them. I wonder if it will tell them “a story” as they stand questioning before it!

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*September 21.*—The last tenter on the beach has departed. He—or they, for there were two of them—left yesterday afternoon. In the morning, as I walked along the beach, I saw them come out of their tent carrying a bushel basket between them which was full of soiled dishes. Both were clad in bathing suits, and setting down the basket on the shore they waded into the water up to their knees, each carrying a handful of plates, cups, and saucers, which they proceeded to wash by repeated immersion in the convenient sea, using their hands for dish-cloth and making renewed trips back and forth until all the contents of the basket had been attended to. “Doing your week’s dish-washing, aren’t you?” I said. They grinned, and claimed that it was the collection of only twenty-four hours. “Well,” I added, “I know by experience what camping out is. It means a lot of fun and some bother; but I think the fun greatly outweighs the bother. At any rate, it is an experience by which we men have a first-rate chance to find how nice and handy it is to have a woman about the house.” They grinned again and said, “That’s so.”



## SEASIDE SCENES AND THOUGHTS

*September 22.*—For some time now I have been having an early 6 o'clock breakfast with Carl, whom business calls away every morning to the big city, and who has to rush off with Otilie in her Regal and kiss her good-by on his way to the train. These early breakfasts redound to me one advantage which I may name; that is, they enable me to take my pipe along on these beach walks and have a good smoke-think near the *Sindia*. None but a sailor or an Irishman, or some other fellow whose stomach is lined with an equally tough membrane, should smoke a pipe save on the physical basis of a substantial meal. I have no habit which I hold to but in intelligent consistency with the laws of the goddess Hygeia, and so long as I do that all pesky reformers are warned off my premises.

How I have enjoyed these smoke-thinks alone with my silent and suffering friend *Sindia*! Enjoyed and sorrowed some, too. I have been a worshiper and a wonderer here at Nature's altar, in her cathedral domed by the sky and organed by the sea. This was my enjoyment, deep, high, and thrilling. But my sorrow came when I thought that,



as beneath the Old-World cathedrals many dead are buried, so in the depths of this ocean spread out before me countless thousands are wrapped in watery shrouds, helpless victims of storm and wreck. Ah, this duplex, antithetic character of Nature,—beautiful and yet brutal! I am as sensitive to the one of these aspects as I am to the other. From the heavenly heights of ecstasy in the presence of the beautiful I fall into the Tartarean depths of anguish at the sight and knowledge of suffering. When I recall my own extended observation and experience, and even more when I con the pages of history and reflect that for much of the suffering therein recorded Nature alone has been responsible, I have to be honest with myself and admit that she contradicts too often the New Testament to make credible its beautiful myth of a “Heavenly Father.”

Just here it may be proper to remark upon some of the beautiful lies which the poets tell us, when, in addition to being poets, they are also sentimental pietists and optimists. Not to mention Wordsworth, here is our own dear Whittier singing—

## SEASIDE SCENES AND THOUGHTS

“I sit beside the silent sea  
And wait the muffled oar,  
Assured no harm can come to me  
On ocean or on shore.”

Now, this is not only melodious poetry,—it is delicious sentiment; but is it *true*? Does the experience or the observation of the average human being confirm it? The other day an innocent and happy lad came down from Philadelphia to visit another lad in Ocean City. They went in bathing together alone, as they had often done before, this beach being regarded as an unusually safe one for bathers of all ages owing to its very gradual sloping seaward. But we had previously been having some high tides, and when the visiting lad waded out confidently into the water he stepped suddenly into a deep hole which the furious surf had gullied out, and being unable to swim he was drowned. His friend did his utmost to save him, and nearly lost his own life in doing so. The following day the drowned boy was carried home to his mother. Did “no harm” come to that lad, or to the mother who bore him? Did “no harm”

## SEASIDE SCENES AND THOUGHTS

come to the seven hundred who went to their death on the ill-fated *Titanic*? Did “no harm” come to the countless millions who “on shore” have perished—at one time or another, in one way or another—by Nature’s own tremendous action? “The Eternal Goodness” of which Whittier pipes so exquisitely appears often to exhibit a very temporary and undependable quality.

Again, Browning sings—

“God ’s in his heaven:  
All ’s right with the world.”

If Robert Browning had ever been a thoughtful student of history, he would have been convinced that the world has never been “all right;” indeed, it many times would have seemed to him that the world both of man and matter was mighty near being all wrong. And if he was an intelligent and sympathetic observer of current events in his own day, he must have felt that the world needed much mending before even he could pronounce it “all right.” As for God being in “his heaven” (wherever that may be), he appears often to be so deeply buried in it

that this afflicted old world goes stumbling on in its precarious course without any help from him.

Why cannot the poets write what is *true* as well as what is beautiful, what accords with our own every-day experience and observation as well as what imagination suggests? Just as good poetry can be made out of facts as out of fiction.

*September 23.*—The sea was in a calmer mood this morning than I have seen it at any time since I began to pace before it. No incoming wave was so high that a child might not have stepped over it, and the noise of its rush and fall was so faint that my dull ears were wholly insensible to it. The tide was so low that I had ample choice of a pathway on the broad strand, where I wandered up and down at my wayward will. The “blue urn” was speckless, and the air, though sharp, was deliciously pure. When I reached the *Sindia* I found myself in a decidedly romantic mood. Yet there was nothing human in sight to be romantic with or about,—no babies, no children, no lovers. I was *solus* with the new day, Old Ocean,

and the *Sindia*. Ahoy there! I have an idea. The captain of that ship was a Scotchman. I used to know two or three Scotch songs, which I found useful (oh, so many years ago!) in helping to get my own babies to sleep. Looking cautiously all about me to make sure that I had no critical audience to be offended by my performance, I began to sing. It took two whole stanzas of a pathetic Scotch love-song (besides the sound of my own voice) to make me willing to quit being romantic, and just do nothing but smoke and think.

*September 24.*—These two fine lines from Emerson—

“Haughtily the new day  
Fills his blue urn with fire”—

came sparkling into my mind as I strode up the beach this morning, though the next two following—

“One thought is in the heavens above  
And one in our desire”—

seemed to me somewhat enveloped in dubiety. The “thought in the heavens” must have been projected there by the poet’s

own "desire," since how otherwise could he have known what it was? However, it sounds well and rounds out the stanza handsomely. The sky was again flawless, unflecked by the least remnant of a cloud. Indeed, it was a sky which Italy might be proud of, albeit unaccompanied with her bland air. The beach was loaded with sea-shells,—huge thick beds of them, besides long wide rows piled high. Among them I noticed two monstrous "king crabs," shaped much like a horseshoe with a long tail to it. Another strange sea-animal I saw was something over twelve inches long, consisting of a series of perfect rings, each distinct from the other, but all connected by a small motor cord or nerve. What a queer medley of population dwells in the sea, and how ruthless it is to their lives and safety!

*September 25.*—This is my last day in Ocean City, and this my last morning walk on its beach. It is hard and smooth as a ballroom floor, undisfigured by anything save these little white sepulchers of sea-animals which once inhabited them with a love of even their low form of life. The

new day is beautiful, and the ocean scene is glorious. I have passed many summers by the sea, but never before have I come into such understanding intimacy with it as during the season now ended. Sympathetically I have entered into its various moods and aspects, and in so doing it has searched me through and through. Mighty and grand it is, yet sinister and terrible,—in both these particulars truly representing the universe of which it is a type. Byron's splendid sonnet to the ocean comes to me now, and I repeat it aloud as my farewell:—

“Roll on, thou deep and dark blue ocean, roll!

Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain.

Man marks the earth with ruin, but his control

Stops with the shore. Upon the watery plain

The wrecks are all thy deed; nor doth remain

A shadow of man's ravage save his own,

When for a moment, like a drop of rain,

He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,

Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and unknown.”

Good-by all! I am going home to go to school to my grandchildren, and to get eightified.













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